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THE POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN DRYDEN

IN FIVE VOLUMES

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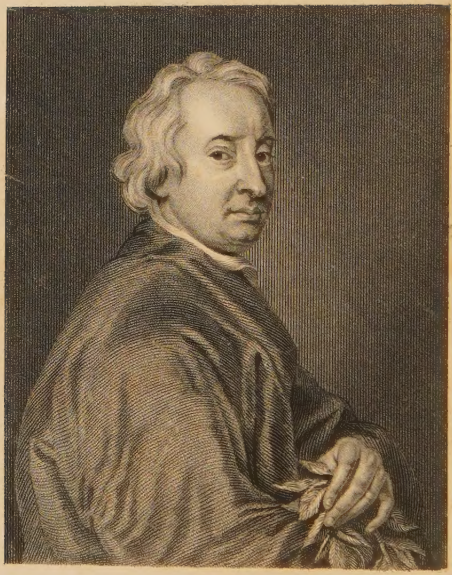


H. Robinson sc.

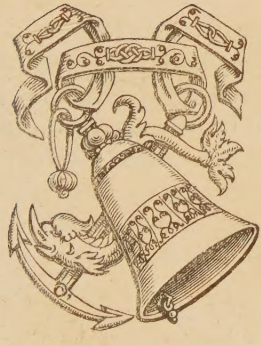
Jon: Dryden.

THE

POETICAL WORKS OF

JOHN DRYDEN

VOLUME I



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1865.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present Complete Edition of Dryden's Poems and Translations is not merely a reprint of that issued by the late Mr. Pickering. The text has been carefully collated with the earliest and best copies. The Life has been re-written; and, while laying no special claim to originality, the writer, by patiently re-investigating facts, has endeavoured to give a fair and impartial account of the Poet and his Works. In doing this, he has not hesitated to avail himself largely of the labours of his predecessors; more especially the exhaustive researches of Sir Walter Scott and Malone. Nor can he omit to mention with pleasure the service done to Dryden's memory by the discoveries of his latest biographer, Mr. Robert Bell.

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THE LIFE OF DRYDEN.

BY THE REV. RICHARD HOOPER.

THE orthography of family names in the 17th century being so loose, it is not surprising that we should find that of Dryden varying considerably. It would have been unnecessary to notice this fact, had not Malone asserted that the poet was the first to change the spelling from Dr*i*den to Dr*y*den; a change which, he tells us, gave offence to Sir Robert Driden, Bart., the then head of the family. It is probable however that Dryden did not originate this change, but merely adhered to an orthography which had been frequently in use before. Thus in the "Admission Book" of Trinity College, Cambridge, p. 15, is the entry, "John Dr*i*den, Northampton. admissus Pens. Maij 18, 1650, [Tutor] Mr. Templar;" yet in the "Scholars' Register" of the College, under the date October 2, 1650, we find amongst those *admissi discipuli è Scholâ Westmonasteriens.* "Johannes Dr*y*den, Northamptoniensis." And when his name occurs under less honourable circumstances in the College Books of 1652, it is spelt Dr*y*den. We can hardly suppose that this orthography was adopted upon the au-

thority of a mere youth. Mr. Bell has also found three letters at Canons-Ashby from Erasmus Dryden, cousin to the poet, written in the year 1656-7, "in which the name is spelt Dryden, both in the signature and superscription." As an instance, too, of the arbitrary mode of writing names, it may be mentioned that the matriculation of Charles, the poet's eldest son, at Cambridge, is thus entered in the "University Register," under June 27, 1683, "Carolus Dreiden, Coll. Trin." Antony Wood and Aubrey both spell it Dreyden, and we occasionally find it printed Dreydon.

The family of Driden, or Dryden, of Canons-Ashby in Northamptonshire, originally came from the north of England, where, as well as in the neighbouring counties of Scotland, according to Sir Walter Scott, the name still frequently occurs, though it is not now borne by any families of distinction. The poet's immediate ancestor, the first of whom any record can be found, was David Driden (or Dryden), who married the daughter of William Nicholson of Staff-hill, in the county of Cumberland. The eldest son of this marriage—John Dryden—in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, or a little earlier, removed to Northamptonshire, where he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Cope, Knight, and through her acquired the estate of Canons-Ashby. Gossipping Antony Wood tells us that John Dryden was a schoolmaster, and that the great Erasmus stood godfather to one of his sons. One of these statements is certainly incorrect, as a mere glance at dates will show; nor is it very likely that a

schoolmaster would have gained the hand of the daughter and heiress of a knightly family. The poet's grandfather was the eldest son of this marriage. His name. Erasmus, which long continued in the family, was probably derived from Erasmus Cope, his maternal uncle, who *may* have been the godson of the famous Erasmus. He was born Dec. 20, 1553, was High Sheriff of Northamptonshire, 40 Eliz., and created a Baronet Nov. 16, 1619. Sir Erasmus Driden married Frances, second daughter and co-heiress of William Wilkes of Hodnell, co. Warwick, Esq., by whom he had, with three daughters, three sons, John, William, and Erasmus. John, his heir and successor in the title and estates, married for his third wife (having previously had no issue) Honor, daughter of Sir Robert Bevile of Chesterton, co. Huntingdon, Knt., and by her (with other children) was the father of John Driden of Chesterton, and Honor Driden. The second son, William, was of Farndon, Northamptonshire; and the third, Erasmus, of Blakesly near Tichmarsh in the same county, and father of the poet.

Erasmus Driden married Mary, daughter of the Rev. Henry Pickering, the youngest son of Sir Gilbert Pickering. Mr. Pickering was made Rector of Aldwinckle All Saints, in 1647, and from the date of the preferment we may conjecture was of Puritan principles, for which his family was notorious. The family of Erasmus Driden was very numerous, being no less than fourteen in number. Of these, four were sons, and John, the poet, was the eldest. Erasmus, the second, was a

grocer in King Street, Westminster, and eventually became the baronet and succeeded to the estate of Canons-Ashby upon the death of Sir Erasmus Henry, the poet's son. The third son, Henry, went to Jamaica, where he died; and James, the fourth, was a tobacconist in London. Mr. Malone has recorded the marriages of six of the daughters. Of these, the youngest—Frances—was the wife of Joseph Sandwell, a tobacconist in Newgate Street, and died Oct. 10, 1736, at the great age of 90.

It is remarkable that we are not able to ascertain, with any precision, either the date or place of the birth of JOHN DRYDEN. He himself says, in the postscript to his "Virgil," "The seventh Æneid was made English at Burghley, the magnificent abode of the Earl of Exeter; in a village belonging to his family I was born." This village is said, by Antony Wood and by common tradition, to be Aldwinckle All Saints. Malone, however, discovered that Lord Exeter's property was in the neighbouring parish of Aldwinckle St. Peter's. This trifling discrepancy might have been unknown to Dryden, as the parishes are closely contiguous. Another tradition, that he was born in the parsonage-house of Aldwinckle All Saints seems to have originated from the fact of his grandfather having been rector of the parish. But Mr. Pickering was not instituted till 1647, and it is improbable, as Malone conjectures, that he should have been curate there and rented the parsonage-house fifteen or sixteen years previously.

The date of the poet's birth is equally uncertain. In the preface to his "Fables," written probably at the close of the year 1699, with reference to his age, he says, "I have the excuse of an old gentleman, who mounting on horseback before some ladies, when I was present, got up somewhat heavily, but desired of the fair spectators that they would count fourscore and eight before they judged him. By the mercy of God, I am already come within twenty years of his number."[1] This would fix his birth at least in the year 1631. His biographers had been content for many years to name the day August 9th, upon the authority of a note written by Pope, and printed in an edition of his works in 1735. This note gives the original draught of an epitaph intended for Dryden's monument in Westminster Abbey, erected by Sheffield Duke of Buckinghamshire, but which was changed, as Pope says, "to the plain inscription now upon it, viz.: J. Dryden, Natus Aug. 9, 1631. Mortuus Maii 1, 1701." But, as Malone observes, the present inscription is "J. Dryden, Natus 1632. Mortuus Maii 1, 1700. Joannes Sheffield, Dux Buckinghamiensis, posuit, 1720."

In the Ashmolean MSS. (No. 243, "Black's Catalogue,") Dryden's birthday is fixed August 19th, 1631. From this latter testimony, and Pope's note, we may conclude that there was a floating tradition that Dryden was born in August,

[1] So in a letter to his cousin, Mrs. Steward, dated March 4th, 1698-9, he says, "I am still drudging at a "Book of Miscellanyes, which I hope will be well enough; if otherwise, threescore and seven may be pardoned." These Miscellanies were the "Fables" in question.

1631, but of the day we can arrive at no certain proof. The parish register of Aldwinckle All Saints, previous to 1650, has been lost, so the baptism of the poet, if born there, is unrecorded. In later life his adversaries charged him with having been an Anabaptist, but though his family were of puritan principles, there does not appear any probability for this assertion. It is just possible that the Aldwinckle registers might have been mutilated for the purpose of trumping up this accusation; or, perhaps, their known loss might have suggested the malicious taunt, as the poet could not prove his baptism. From a monument erected to the memory of his father and mother, Erasmus and Mary Dryden, in Tichmarsh Church, by his kinswoman, Mrs. Eliza Creed, in 1722, we learn that the poet received his earlier education in that place, or at Oundle. "We boast that he was bred and had his first learning here; where he has often made us happie by his kind visits and most delightful conversation." He was very partial to his native county, and his letters record many journeys thither. From thence he was removed to Westminster School, then presided over by the celebrated Doctor Richard Busby. In due time, but in what year it does not appear, he was elected a king's scholar. He ever entertained a great regard for his old master. He inscribes his translation of the "fifth Satire of Persius" to him, and in the postscript to the argument of the "third Satire," he adds, "I remember I translated this "Satire" when I was a king's scholar at Westminister School, for a

Thursday night's exercise, and believe that it, and many other of my exercises of this nature in English verse, are still in the hands of my learned master, the Rev. Dr. Busby." It is to be regretted that none of these have come down to posterity. While at school he wrote the lines on the "Death of Lord Hastings," published in a volume entitled the "Lachrymæ Musarum, the Tears of the Muses, &c. &c., on the Death of the most hopeful Henry Lord Hastings, 1650." All his biographers have referred to the ridiculous language, and forced conceits, of this the earliest effort of his Muse; but, though it does not certainly give any indication of the future excellence to which he attained, considering the age at which it was written and the false wit and fashion of the day, it is not worse than many of the productions of the greatest names of the period. He was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, on May 18, 1650, under Mr. Templar as Tutor; and on 6th July, 1650, he was matriculated a pensioner of the College; but as, by a Resolution of the House of Commons, 19th Jan. 1640-1, it was decreed that no subscriptions to religious tests should be required, neither upon his matriculation nor his admission to his B.A. degree in January, 1653-4, does his handwriting occur in the Registrar's Books, a blank being left till the Restoration, 1660. On the 2nd October, 1650, he was elected a scholar of the College upon the Westminster Foundation. The only record of his undergraduate life is not much to his credit, though it shows a state of college discipline which would

be scarcely submitted to at the present day. It would seem that he had incurred the displeasure of one of the authorities, when "it was agreed that Dryden be put out of cōmons for a fortnight, at least, and that he goe not out of the colledg during the time aforesaid, excepting to sermons, without express leave frō the Master or Vice-master, and that at the end of the fortnight *he read a confession of his crime in the hall at dinner-time, at the three Fellows' tables.* His crime was his disobedience to the Vice-master, and his contumacy in taking of his punishment inflicted by him."[1] When we read this, we are almost inclined to believe the somewhat apocryphal story of the greater indignity said to have been put upon Milton at his college. In the earlier part of his residence he prefixed a few lines to a work, entitled "Sion and Parnassus; or Epigrams on several Texts of the Old and New Testaments," by John Hoddesden, published in 1650. These are signed "J. Dryden of Trin. C.C." They were first pointed out by Malone. The four opening lines would pretend that they were the first poetical effort of the writer, yet we have seen that he had already tried his hand,

[1] The wretched libeller Shadwell, in his "Medal of John Bayes," insinuated that Dryden had insulted a nobleman at Trinity by some satirical allusion—

"At Cambridge first your scurrilous vein began,
Where saucily you traduced a nobleman;
Who for that crime rebuked you on the head,
And you had been expell'd, had you not fled."

It is needless to remark that this, like most of the many libels on the poet, was most probably a mere lying invention of the scribbler.

and, probably, had been pretty well trained, at Westminster :—

> "Thou hast inspired me with thy spirit, and I,
> Who ne'er before could ken of poetry,
> Am grown so good proficient, I can lend
> A line in commendation of my friend."

The versification is inharmonious, and the language, as usual with commendatory poems of that day, highly conceited and strained.

Dryden proceeded at the ordinary period to his B.A. degree (January, 1653-4), but never to that of M.A., which he received from the Archbishop of Canterbury. It has been somewhat unnecessarily thought by his biographers, that in after-life he entertained an aversion to the University, and in support of this opinion some lines from a "Prologue to the University of Oxford" are quoted. But the probability is that these lines were merely intended as a compliment to Oxford for the encouragement given to the theatre. In fact, the whole tenour of the Prologue is to this effect, and in concluding he says :—

> "If his ambition may those hopes pursue,
> Who, with religion, loves your arts and you,
> Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
> Than his own mother-University.
> Thebes did his green, unknowing, youth engage;
> He chooses Athens in his riper age."

The usual mode of quoting the four last lines of the Prologue, without reference to the whole of the preceding matter, would leave the impression upon the reader that he had expressed a positive predilection for Oxford over his "mother-University."

But we are afraid that the poet was somewhat insincere in his flattery, for what shall we say to the following passage, in a letter to Lord Rochester, concerning at least one of his prologues?—"I have sent your Lordship a prologue and an epilogue, which I made for our players when they went down to Oxford. I hear they have succeeded; and by the event your Lordship will judge how easy 'tis to pass anything upon an University, and how gross flattery the learned will endure." That he did sometimes look back upon his college-career with gratitude, the following passage from his "Life of Plutarch" (p. 78. ed. 1683) will show: "I read 'Plutarch' in the library of Trinity College, in Cambridge, to which foundation I gratefully acknowledge a great part of my education."

Shortly after taking his degree he lost his father, who died in June, 1654. Malone supposes his absence from the University upon this occasion was the cause of his name not appearing amongst the contributors to the "Oliva Pacis," a collection of congratulatory addresses to Cromwell on the Peace between England and Holland, printed at Cambridge in 1654. We may well be content with the loss, as his poetical effusions at this period of his life are of little or no credit to him.

By his father's death he succeeded to the small estate of Blakesley, about three miles from Canons-Ashby. Two-thirds, worth about £60 a-year in all, were devised to him; and the remaining third to his mother, which reverted to him on her death in 1676. His thirteen brothers and sisters were provided for by a separate bequest

of about £1,250, and Malone has entered into minute details of their several legacies and their father's will. Dryden's father was probably a zealous Presbyterian, in common with the rest of his family. The elder brother, Sir John Driden, was a rabid fanatic, and had shamefully desecrated the church of Canons-Ashby. After settling his affairs in Northamptonshire, Dryden appears to have returned to Cambridge, and made it his home for three years. This does not seem to be the act of one who entertained a dislike to the University. What his pursuits were during these years cannot now be ascertained. They were, however, not entirely dedicated to the severity of the cloister. In his frequent visits to his native county, probably during the sweet summer-tide of the long vacations, he had fallen in love with his cousin, Honor Driden, the daughter of Sir John, the puritan baronet of Canons-Ashby. Her principles were possibly not so severe as those of her father, or at least her features were not cast in the same sour and rigid mould. But, in addition to her personal charms, she possessed those of a fortune, and, however much she might have liked Cousin John to flirt with, she does not seem to have treated his more serious advances with favour. Yet she gave him a silver inkstand and writing materials, for which he returned what he doubtless thought a very winning epistle. It is full of forced conceits, and is not over-delicate; but "such conceits," observes Malone, "were at that time not merely pardoned but admired, and with the allusion no reader of either sex, however fastidious,

was likely to be offended." 'Tis said, in after years, when her cousin became illustrious, that Miss Honor repented of her haughty cruelty, and was very proud of showing the letter. She never married, but afterwards resided at Chesterton, keeping the house of her brother John, with whom the poet always maintained a most affectionate intercourse. Tradition says that it was at Chesterton that Dryden inscribed the first lines of his "Virgil" with a diamond on a pane of glass.

In 1657 he settled in London, under the auspices of his relations, Sir Gilbert Pickering and, probably, Sir John Driden. Sir Gilbert was a bitter and uncompromising puritan, who had sat upon the trial of the unhappy King Charles, though he was not present on the last and fatal day. He was one of Cromwell's privy council, chamberlain of his household, high steward of Westminster, and in 1658 one of his other House, or House of Lords, as it was called. We have no evidence that Dryden was employed in any public capacity. From an allusion of one of his enemies, it is probable that he was secretary or amanuensis to Sir Gilbert. The many libels, however, that persecuted him through life, can hardly be relied upon as creditable proofs on any point. It can scarcely be supposed, from his subsequent conversion to Roman Catholicism, and his attachment to the Stuart dynasty at its fall, that his puritan convictions were ever very deeply rooted. A young man, just fresh from college, and entering upon life, might be pardoned for availing himself of those opportunities which his powerful family

interests, and the apparent unlikelihood of an immediate change of government, pointed out. When, then, the Protector died in September, 1658, it is not surprising that we find him becoming a candidate for public fame by publishing some stanzas on the occasion. The first edition of this poem, "printed for William Wilson, and are to be sold in Well-yard, near Little St. Bartholomew's Hospital, 1659, 4to." is of extreme rarity. It was reprinted in the same year with others by Waller and Sprat. On these stanzas Mr. Mitford remarks: "The flow of his versification was improved, and his command of poetical language more extended; but he still confined his ambition to subtleties of thought, quaint allusions, and unexpected combinations of remote images. His ideas are laboured, and his inventions curious. No marks are yet discovered of the luxuriance of early genius, or the overflow of a mind full of poetry." With the Restoration came the end of all Dryden's family influence. Sir Gilbert Pickering seems to have been consistent to his principles to the last moment, and it was only through the exertions of Lord Sandwich, his brother-in-law, that he was permitted to retire to Northamptonshire with merely the disqualification for exercising any civil or military office.

Dryden was now left to his own resources, and if he be accused of inconsistency and servility in employing his muse to congratulate the restored monarch, we must remember that that inconsistency was shared with many greater names, nay, perhaps, with more than half the nation. What are we to say to the example of the most

illustrious monument of learning that this country can boast? Cromwell had given great encouragement to Brian Walton in his glorious undertaking of the "Polyglot," and that great work was prepared with a preface and dedication to the Protector, but, his death intervening, the sheets were cancelled, and a laudatory inscription to Charles II. supplied their place. The editor was rewarded by a royal chaplaincy and a mitre. Waller and Sprat, too, were equally forward in hailing the Restoration. We are not surprised at finding the former amongst the panegyrists; his whole life was inconsistent. Sprat finally reaped a mitre. Dryden, it is said, never owned his Elegy on the Protector in his collected works, though his enemies took care that it should not be forgotten; it was reprinted in 1681, shortly after the publication of his "Absalom and Achitophel," with some scurrilous lines attached. The "Astræa Redux," though, perhaps, an improvement in his versification, is still disfigured by conceits and mythological allusions. Mr. Mitford observes, that the frequent use of the verb "do," in its several tenses, occurs in a very displeasing manner in this poem, and, indeed, it was never fully laid aside before it fell under the correcter taste and more fastidious ear of Pope.

Not aware that his patrimony, though moderate, enabled him to be above the reach of want, his lampooners describe him at this period of his life as labouring for a subsistence as a literary drudge in the employ of Herringman, a publisher of plays and poems in the New Exchange. Had he been

such, and if he had supplied prefaces to Herringman's books, we should probably have had some indication of the fact; but in November, 1662, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, which would at least show that he had obtained some position in the world. His connection with Herringman, whatever it might have been, probably introduced him to the acquaintance of Sir Robert Howard, whose sister, the Lady Elizabeth, he subsequently married, and to whose poems, published in 1660 by Herringman, he prefixed some commendatory lines. About May or June, 1661, he published a "Panegyric to his Sacred Majesty on his Coronation;" and on New Year's Day, 1662, addressed a poem to the Lord Chancellor Hyde. In this year (1662) he also wrote some lines entitled "A Satire on the Dutch," which were subsequently woven into the prologue and epilogue of his play "Amboyna." They are interesting, as being the first specimen of his satirical powers. These scanty productions of his muse would lead us to suspect that his time was occupied otherwise than by literature only, but we have not the slightest clue as to what his occupation may have been. A new field, however, was now opening for his talents, and he quickly availed himself of it, and from henceforth adopted literature as his profession. With the restoration of the monarchy were re-opened the gates of the theatre, the latest echoes of whose walls had been called forth by Shirley's muse. Dryden immediately sketched the draught of a tragedy on the fate of the Duke of Guise. "In the year of his Majesty's happy

restoration," he says, "the first play I undertook was the Duke of Guise, as the fairest way which the Act of Indemnity had then left us of setting forth the rise of the late rebellion, and by exploding the villanies of it upon the stage, to precaution posterity against the like errors." The friends, however, to whose judgment he submitted it, thought his first essay for the stage not wrought with sufficient art to ensure success, and it was consequently laid aside for many years. Undeterred by this criticism of his friends, Dryden determined once more to try his hand at the drama, and this time with a comedy. The "Wild Gallant" was played in February, 1662-3. It met with no success, and he was compelled to recall it. Quaint Mr. Pepys, who visited the theatre on the 23rd of February, says, "It was ill-acted, and the play so poor a thing as ever I saw in my life almost, and so little answering the name, that from the beginning to the end I could not, nor can at this time, tell certainly which was the 'Wild Gallant.' The king did not seem pleased at all the whole play, nor anybody else." Notwithstanding the disapproval of the public, the notorious Countess of Castlemaine, afterwards Duchess of Cleveland, extended her protection to the unfortunate performance, and, through her influence, probably, it was more than once acted at court by the king's own command. For this kindness of the royal favourite, Dryden addressed to her some complimentary lines, which his enemies did not forget in after years. In his preface to the play, when published, Dryden confessed

his failure. "It was the first attempt I made in dramatic poetry, and, I find since, a very bold one, to begin with comedy, which is the most difficult part of it. The best apology I can make for it, and the truest, is only this, that you have, since that time, received with applause as bad and as uncorrect plays from other men." It must be obvious that, in a brief memoir like the present, it would be impossible to give detailed criticisms on eight-and-twenty dramas, nor does it seem necessary. The plays of Dryden are confessedly now little read. The offensive looseness of the dialogue, the bombast and the absurdity of many of the characters and positions, have justly thrown them into oblivion, an oblivion from which only a few detached passages deserve to be rescued. Though it is true, as Dr. Johnson says, "of the stage, when he had once invaded it, he kept possession for many years, with such a degree of reputation as made him at least secure of being heard, whatever might be the final determination of the public," that final decision is such that Dryden's plays, we suspect, would now find few readers, and still fewer spectators, if represented on the stage. It might have been thought that his second ill-success would have at least made him pause before trying his fortune once more, but in the latter part of the year 1663 he appeared again before the public with his "Rival Ladies," a tragi-comedy, in which "the tragic scenes are written in rhyme, while the lighter are formed into blank verse." It was dedicated, on its publication in 1664, to the Earl of Orrery, who had himself

written several plays in rhyme. In the dedication Dryden warmly defends the use of rhyming verse, an opinion which he lived to retract. It was answered in the following year by Sir Robert Howard, in a preface to a collection of his plays. This reply gave rise to Dryden's celebrated "Essay on Dramatic Poesy," which was in its turn attacked by Sir Robert, and Dryden finally rejoined with his defence of the Essay. The "Rival Ladies" seems to have been well received. Pepys, who saw it on the 4th of August, 1664, calls it "a very innocent and most pretty witty play. I was much pleased with it." It probably tended to redeem the credit of the author of the "Wild Gallant," but it would be difficult to discover either the innocence or pretty wit which so pleased Mr. Pepys. The scene between Hippolito and Amideo (Act iv. sc. 3) is, as Mr. Mitford observes, ludicrous and absurd. The plot is concluded, not by a skilful combination of events gradually closing and conducting to the development, but by an unnatural transfer of affection in the heroines of the drama suddenly huddled up in the concluding scene.

All his biographers prior to Mr. Bell were unable to fix with certainty the date of Dryden's marriage. To that gentleman, however, we are indebted for the discovery of the day of this, shall we say auspicious? event. It was on the 1st of December, 1663, that "John Driden, of St. Clement Danes, in the county of Middlesex, Esq., aged about 30 yeares, and a batchelor," married, in the parish church of St. Swithin's, London, "Dame Elizabeth

Howard, of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, in the county aforesaid, aged about 25 yeares, with the consent of her father, Thomas Earle of Berke." The Lady Elizabeth was sister to his friend Sir Robert Howard. The entry of the licence, which is dated "ultimo Novembris, 1663," is in the office of the vicar-general of the Archbishop of Canterbury. As Mr. Bell observes, it would be vain to inquire why the marriage took place at St. Swithin's, to which neither party belonged, Dryden being described as of St. Clement Danes, and the lady as a resident of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. That there were suspicious circumstances about the marriage the many lampoons which persecuted Dryden through life attest. The character of the Lady Elizabeth does not seem to have been above the reach of scandal. Mr. Mitford calls attention to what he styles a very *awkward letter* from her to Philip, second Earl of Chesterfield; and in a scurrilous pamphlet, entitled "Satyr to his Muse, by the author of Absalom and Achitophel," 1682, he is described as being "hectored into marriage" by the lady's "brawny brothers," with a not very satisfactory account of the lady herself. Yet we need not attach too much weight to evidence of this sort. The whole life of Dryden is so entangled with the malignity of his enemies, a malignity so entirely arising from envy, and so intense in its persecution, that it not unfrequently defeats its own object. We may passingly notice that in his signature to the affidavit for his licence he writes his name John *Driden*. The name is spelt *Draydon* in the marriage register of St.

Swithin's, but it is in the handwriting of the parish clerk, who has also written the lady's name *Haward*. It is probable that Dryden did not receive any considerable portion with his wife, as the Earl of Berkshire was poor, considering his rank, and had a large family; but from a passage in one of his dedications to the Earl of Rochester, he alludes to some property in Wiltshire, which we may suppose was the settlement made upon Lady Elizabeth at her marriage. Under whatever circumstances the marriage may have taken place, it is clear that Dryden frequently visited and stayed at Charlton, his father-in-law's family seat, for from thence he dated his Introduction to the "Annus Mirabilis," in 1666. The match, however, was not productive of much happiness to either party. "It is difficult," says Scott, "for a woman of a violent temper and weak intellects—and such the lady seems to have been—to endure the apparently causeless fluctuation of spirits incident to one doomed to labour incessantly in the feverish excitement of the imagination. Unintentional neglect, and the inevitable relaxation, or rather sinking of spirit, which follows violent mental exertion, are easily misconstrued into capricious rudeness, or intentional offence; and life is embittered by mutual accusation, not the less intolerable because reciprocally just. The wife of one who is to gain his livelihood by poetry, or by any labour (if any there be) equally exhausting, must either have taste enough to relish her husband's performances, or good nature sufficient to pardon his infirmities. It was Dryden's misfor-

tune that Lady Elizabeth had neither the one nor the other; and I dismiss the disagreeable subject by observing, that on no one occasion, when a sarcasm against matrimony could be introduced, has our author failed to season it with such bitterness as spoke an inward consciousness of domestic misery."

We have seen that Dryden had long been on terms of intimacy with Sir Robert Howard, his wife's brother. In the beginning of the year 1664 appeared the "Indian Queen," the joint production of their pens. What proportion of the play was written by Dryden cannot now be ascertained. It is probable he exercised a general supervision of the whole, though Scott thinks the third act shows more immediate marks of his style. It was brought on the stage with great magnificence; and both Evelyn and Pepys speak of the richness of the scenes. It was printed in 1665. The success of the "Indian Queen" encouraged Dryden to write, what can hardly be called a sequel except in name, the tragedy of the "Indian Emperor." The same scenery was used, but there was little connection between the plot of the play and that of its precursor. "Indeed," says Scott, "the whole persons of the 'Indian Queen' are disposed of by the bowl and dagger at the conclusion of the tragedy, excepting Montezuma, who with a second set of characters—the sons and daughters of those deceased in the first part—occupies the stage in the second play." The "Indian Emperor" was acted in the winter of 1664-5, and its success at once placed Dryden

on the pinnacle of his dramatic fame. The "Indian Emperor" was printed in 1667, under which year we shall again have occasion to notice it.

In consequence of the Plague which broke out with such alarming violence this year (1665) and the terrific conflagration in the following, which laid the most populous and wealthy part of London in ashes, no plays were allowed to be exhibited. The prohibition extended from May, 1665, to Christmas, 1666. Part, at least, of this interval was spent at Charlton, Lord Berkshire's seat in Wiltshire, and was employed on the first poem of any length which he had given to the public. The "Annus Mirabilis," the "Year of Wonders," is dated from Charlton, Nov. 10, 1666, in a letter addressed to Sir Robert Howard, prefixed to the publication in 1667. It is one of his most elaborate works, and he himself thought fit, to use Johnson's expression, to "exercise the domination of conscious genius by recommending his own performance." Yet, with all the praise that has been bestowed upon it, the metre—following the example of Sir William D'Avenant's "Gondibert"—does not to modern ears seem adapted to heroic poetry. The four-line stanza with us is so associated with the elegy, that we can hardly reconcile our minds to its use in more lofty themes. The merits and defects of the poem may be summed up in Mr. Mitford's words: "There are lofty allusions connected with mean and minute descriptions more adapted to a Gazette than a poem. The sense alternately swells into the bombastic, or descends to the low, and wanders into false

allusions and unnatural conceits. There is an extravagance in the colouring, and an extravagance in the language, a want of keeping or harmony of style and imagery—elegant similes and noble sentiments being united to the low and technical language of the ledger." But let us not forget with all this that there are some detached passages of great beauty and merit. The prefatory epistle to Sir Robert Howard would show that, at least at present, there had been no interruption of their friendship. But Dryden's leisure at Charlton was not solely occupied with the "Annus Mirabilis." He had prefixed to the "Rival Ladies" an elaborate defence of the use of rhyme against blank verse, which had called forth some remarks from Sir Robert Howard, and now he drew up his famous "Essay on Dramatic Poesy," written, as he states in a short address to the reader, "in the country, without the help of books or advice of friends." The subject is treated in a dialogue between Eugenius, Lisideius, Crites, and Neander, by whom are meant Lord Buckhurst, Sir Charles Sidley, Sir Robert Howard, and the author himself. Dryden's object, he tells us, was "to vindicate the honour of the English poets from the censures of those who unjustly preferred the French before them." The Essay contains the celebrated character of Shakespeare, which, Dr. Johnson observed, "may stand as a perpetual model of encomiastic criticism, a character so extensive in its comprehension, and so curious in its limitations, that nothing can be added, diminished, or reformed; nor can the

editors or admirers of Shakespeare, in all their emulation of reverence, boast of much more than of having diffused and paraphrased this epitome of excellence, of having changed Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value, though of greater bulk." Crites (Sir Robert Howard), throughout the whole dialogue, is made the champion of unsuccessful opinions. On the publication, therefore, of the "Essay" in the latter part of the year 1667, it is not surprising that a breach in their friendship should have taken place. Sir Robert immediately availed himself of an opportunity of indicating his opinion in the preface to one of his plays—"The Duke of Lerma"—published in 1668. This preface, according to Scott, is written in the tone of a man of quality and importance, who is conscious of stooping beneath his own dignity, and neglecting his graver avocations, by engaging in a literary dispute. Dryden, stung with this tone of affected superiority, rejoined with his "Defence of the Essay on Dramatic Poesy," prefixed to the second edition of the "Indian Emperor," printed in 1668. It is pleasing, however, to record that in after years a reconciliation took place between the brothers-in-law, and the "Defence of the Essay" was cancelled, and a copy of this second edition of the "Indian Emperor," containing it, is now amongst the rarities of literature. Yet the quarrel, whilst it lasted, furnished food for many lampoons to the wits of the day.

Upon the re-opening of the theatres, the comedy of "Secret Love; or the Maiden Queen," was

acted. Pepys tells us that he went to see it on March 2nd, 1666-7: "After dinner, with my wife to the King's House, to see 'The Maiden Queen,' a new play of Dryden's, mightily commended for the regularity of it, and the strain and wit; and the truth is, there is a comical part done by Nell (Gwyn), which is Florimel, that I never can hope ever to see the like done again by man or woman." The play was printed, as the poet informs us, by command of King Charles himself, who graced it with the title of his play, and the plot is even said to have been suggested by his Majesty. Dryden admits that the plot is taken from the romance of "The Grand Cyrus," and in his preface, while doubting "whether an author may be allowed as a competent judge of his own works," upon the whole comes to the conclusion, that he may depend upon his own opinion. Mr. Pepys tells us he went "to the Change, where I bought 'The Maiden Queen,' a play newly printed, which I like at the King's House so well, of Mr. Dryden's, which he himself, in his preface, seems to brag of, and is indeed a good play." The "Wild Gallant" was now revived, and probably received some support from the growing fame of the author. Having established his reputation as a successful dramatist, he availed himself of an offer to enter into an agreement with the King's Theatre, then under the management of Killigrew, to supply it with three plays a year for one share and a quarter out of twelve shares and three-quarters, into which the theatrical stock was divided, which produced him, accord-

ing to a curious memorial of the players preserved by Malone, one year with another, between three and four hundred a year. The memorial in question complains that he did not keep to his agreement, the average number of plays produced being only about half that contracted for; and, moreover, he had, contrary to express stipulations, furnished the Duke's House with the play of "Œdipus," written in conjunction with Lee. "It would have been well for Dryden's reputation, and, perhaps, not less productive to the company, had the number of his plays been still further abridged; for, while we admire the facility that could produce five or six plays in three years, we lament to find it so often exerted to the sacrifice of the more essential qualities of originality and correctness." It appears strange that the first play that Dryden produced, subsequent to this agreement, should have been brought out at the Duke's Theatre. "Sir Martin Mar-all," a comedy founded upon a translation of Molière's "L'Etourdi," by the Duke of Newcastle, was acted at the beginning of the autumnal season of 1667. Its decided success seems to have been caused by the excellent performance of Nokes in the character of Sir Martin. Pepys says, "It is the most entire piece of mirth, a complete farce from one end to the other, that certainly was ever writ. I never laughed so in all my life, and at very good wit therein, not fooling. The house full, and in all things of mighty content to me." Nokes appears to have been the Liston of the day. Scott supposes that the play was acted at the Duke of

York's House at the desire of the Duke of Newcastle, or because it was entered in his name. Pepys mentions it as "a play made by my Lord Duke of Newcastle, but, as everybody says, corrected by Dryden." It was published in 1668, but without the author's name.

On the 7th November, 1667, was acted, at the Duke's Theatre also, "The Tempest," an alteration from Shakespeare, the joint production of Dryden and Sir William D'Avenant. This would seem a second breach of contract with Killigrew on Dryden's part. D'Avenant, however, was manager of the other house, which may account for its appearance there. This alteration of the "Tempest" was D'Avenant's last work, and seems, says Scott, to have been undertaken chiefly with a view to give room for scenical decoration. To say that the alterations from the original are gross and tasteless, is to say but very little. "Not one additional beauty," observes Mr. Mitford, "has been inserted, not one felicitous hint improved; but the profound skill and knowledge of nature, for which the original has been justly praised, has been lost sight of by the improvers, who have stripped the spiritual creation of Shakespeare of its sky-tinctured robes, and stifled the wild harmony of its notes, in order that they might deck it in the artificial finery, and bestow on it the conventional manners, of their grosser times and their degraded theatre." The scenic effect, however, gave it great success. D'Avenant died before the publication of the piece. Dryden's next composition was "An Evening's Love, or the

Mock Astrologer." It was acted at the King's Theatre, June 12th, 1668. Pepys, who saw it a few days afterwards, did not like it, and says, that he heard at Herringman's, the bookseller's, that Dryden himself called it but a fifth-rate play. Evelyn also styles it "a foolish plot, and very profane; it affected me to see how much the stage was degenerated and polluted by the licentious times." It is an imitation of the younger Corneille's "Le Feint Astrologue," which in its turn was founded on Calderon's "El Astrologo Fingido." Dryden drew also upon Moliere's "Dépit Amoureux." It was printed with a dedication to the Duke of Newcastle, and a very interesting Preface on the older dramatists. In this preface he defends himself on the charge of plagiarism, and quotes the words of the king, who had only desired that they who accused Dryden of theft, would steal him such plays as Dryden's. Mr. Bell has observed that Dryden seems to have had great faith in astrology, and resorted to the horoscope to ascertain the destinies of his family. In a letter written to one of his sons at Rome in 1697, he says, "Towards the latter end of this month, September, Charles will begin to recover his perfect health, according to his nativity, which, casting it myself, I am sure is true; and all things hitherto have happened accordingly to the very time I predicted them." When Dryden died, it is said, that the horoscope of his son Charles was found in his pocket-book. It is not very astonishing that a mind so tinctured with credulity should have embraced the tenets of the Church of Rome.

Dryden's next play was "Tyrannic Love, or the Royal Martyr." It was acted towards the end of 1668, or beginning of 1669. "Of this play," says Johnson, "he takes care to let the reader know that it was 'contrived and written' in seven weeks. Want of time was often his excuse, or perhaps shortness of time was his private boast in the form of an apology." "This has been with justice considered one of Dryden's characteristic plays, exhibiting the chief features of the heroic system. The personages of the drama are placed in trying perplexities of situation, and amid extraordinary combinations of events; while the movement of the passions and the progressive action of the story are superseded by declamation, or entangled in argument. Sentiments are expressed in language bombastic and extravagant—

'Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.'

Yet the versification is melodious, the language poetical, the thoughts ingenious, and flashes of purer and nobler feeling occasionally appear; the tender description, it has been remarked, given by Felicia of her attachment to her children in infancy, is exquisitely beautiful."* In the epistle dedicatory to the "Spanish Friar," he confessed to the absurdity of portions of this and another play. "I remember some verses of my own 'Maximin and Almanzor,' which cry vengeance upon me for their extravagance, and which I wish heartily in the same fire with Statius and Chapman." "Tyrannic Love" was dedicated to the Duke of Monmouth, to whose duchess the "Indian

* Mitford.

Emperor" had been previously inscribed. The Duke is compared to an Achilles or Rinaldo, who only wanted a Homer or Tasso to give him his due meed of fame. In the autumn of 1669, and the spring of the following year, were acted the two parts of the "Conquest of Granada." They were received with unbounded applause, and raised the poet, it is said, to a higher point of public esteem than he reached thirty years after by his translation of "Virgil" and his "Fables." Nell Gwynne acted the character of Almahide, and spoke the prologue in the famous broad-brimmed hat which convulsed the king with laughter almost to suffocation. The play was printed in 1672, and Dryden prefixed to it an "Essay on Heroic Plays." Two offices, which had been vacant for some time, were now conferred on him. Sir William D'Avenant, the poet laureate, had died in 1668, and in August, 1670, the post was given to Dryden. The grant bore a retrospect to D'Avenant's death, and to the office was united that of Historiographer Royal, which had become vacant on the demise of James Howell, in 1666. The patent appointing him to these offices is preserved by Malone, and the language of it is very honourable to Dryden—"In consideration of the many good and acceptable services by John Dryden, Master of Arts, and eldest sonne of Erasmus Dryden, of Tichmarshe. in the county of Northampton, Esquire, to us heretofore done and performed, and taking notice of the learning and eminent abilities of him the said John Dryden, and of his great skill and elegant style both in verse and prose, &c. &c." Dryden had never

proceeded to the degree of M.A. at Cambridge, but it was conferred on him by the Archbishop of Canterbury in June, 1668, and from a copy of the dispensation discovered by Malone, it would appear at the king's own request. The salary of the united offices of historiographer and poet laureate was £200, paid quarterly, and when we remember that his share in the theatre was, at the lowest computation, about £300 a-year, with his little patrimony, and some trifling allowance from the Lady Elizabeth's family, his income at this period of his life was not improbably between £700 and £800 a-year—"a sum," says Scott, "more adequate to procure all the comforts, and many of the luxuries of life, than thrice the amount at present." But the burning of the theatre in 1670 greatly injured his income in that quarter, and his salary, like all King Charles's household appointments, was very irregularly paid, and therefore his income, though in nominal amount adequate enough, was in reality very uncertain.

But Dryden was now to taste somewhat of the bitters as well as the sweets of his great success and growing reputation. The admiration of the public for heroic plays, as they were styled, called forth the latent jealousy of his rivals into an open attack upon his fame. In the winter of 1671, "The Rehearsal," the joint production of several wits, with Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, at their head, was acted. Butler, the author of "Hudibras," with Sprat, Clifford, and others, is said to have aided Buckingham. Almost all Dryden's plays, including those on which he set the highest

value, and which he had produced with confidence as models of their kind, were parodied in the "Rehearsal." The attack on heroic plays had been long meditated, it is supposed even so far back as shortly after the Restoration, or about 1664. The principal character was originally designed for Sir William D'Avenant, but on his death Dryden was substituted as the hero. The play owed much of its success to the cleverness of the actors. Dryden's dress, manner, and usual expressions were all copied; and Lacy, the original Bayes, was instructed to speak after the manner of Dryden's recitation. The play, as might be expected, gave great umbrage to the friends and supporters of Lord Orrery, Sir Robert Howard, and others who had produced heroic plays, but the wit and humorous satire soon prevailed, and it met with unbounded success. It has been remarked that Dryden's "Marriage à la Mode" was alluded to in the dialogue, though not acted or published till the following year; but it probably had been shown about, as was the custom, in manuscript.

Though Dryden was, doubtless, stung to the quick with this attack, he did not deign to reply. He acknowledged its cleverness and ability. Years after, when he wrote his dedication to the translation of "Juvenal," he says: "I answered not the 'Rehearsal,' because I knew that the author sate to himself when he drew the picture, and was the very Bayes of his own farce;" but the fact is, the satire was too true, and we may suspect was too difficult to be replied to. However, he avenged himself with payment in full when he painted

Buckingham as Zimri in "Absalom and Achitophel," nine years after. The name of Mr. Bayes was applied to Dryden henceforth by all the low scribblers who teased and annoyed him through life. Great as was the success of the "Rehearsal," it did not banish heroic plays from the stage. Unwilling, perhaps, to be beaten down by his adversaries, or to confess the power of their satire, or, it may be, as it had already become pretty well known in literary circles, to use a modern phrase, Dryden, in 1672, exhibited his "Marriage à la Mode." It is styled a comedy, but Scott considers it a tragi-comedy, or rather a tragedy and comedy, the plot and scenes of which are intermingled, for they have no natural connexion with each other. It was dedicated, on its publication in 1673, to the Earl of Rochester. In this dedication Dryden mentions Lord Rochester's, and also the king's, approval of it in MS. before it appeared on the stage, and that it moreover had received some corrections at Rochester's hands. Rochester is addressed in a strain of fulsome adulation, and, from a letter of Dryden's still preserved, seems to have handsomely acknowledged the compliment. Time, however, showed the poet how ill-judged he had been in choice of a patron.

In the same year (1672) appeared "The Assignation, or Love in a Nunnery." It failed, and was driven off the stage, *against the opinion,* as the author says, *of the best judges.* It was dedicated, in 1673, to Sir Charles Sidley, in a preface full of acrimonious passages referring to the controversies in which the author had been engaged. In 1673

he produced the tragedy of "Amboyna," with the object of inflaming the nation against the Dutch, with whom we were then at war. To the prologue and epilogue were transferred the lines entitled, "A Satire on the Dutch," written some eleven or twelve years before. The play seems to have succeeded on the stage, though Dryden confesses, in his dedication to Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, that it "will scarcely bear a serious perusal, it being contrived and written in a month—the subject barren, the persons low, and the writing not heightened with many laboured scenes." We may accept the author's own criticism; it is confessedly the very worst play he ever wrote.

Encouraged by the success of the "Rehearsal," and provoked by the daring epilogue to the second part of "The Conquest of Granada," in which Dryden had asserted the superiority of the drama of the Restoration over that of the age of Shakespeare, an opinion which he somewhat weakly maintains in his "Defence of the Epilogue," a host of pamphleteers now attacked him, and, under the pretence of advocating the injured cause of the elder drama, passed from a virulent criticism on his writings to personal reflections on his character. In his dedication of the "Assignation" to Sidley, Dryden notices these attacks upon him with a supreme degree of contempt.

In this year (1673), says Johnson, "Dryden seems to have had his quiet much disturbed by the success of the 'Empress of Morocco,' a tragedy written in rhyme by Elkanah Settle." The controversy with Settle is an ungrateful subject, but

as it led to a well-known event in Dryden's life, and is one of the more prominent of the literary quarrels in which he was so frequently engaged, we can hardly pass it over. Rochester and Dryden at this period were on such friendly terms, that the poet had dedicated to his lordship his "Marriage à la Mode," expressing the greatest gratitude for favours done to his fortune and reputation. Rochester, we have seen, had handsomely acknowledged the dedication, which called forth a second tribute of thanks from the poet. But suddenly, and apparently without any other cause than that of the Earl's fickle and jealous temper, this friendly intercourse suffered an irrecoverable shock. Rochester was fond of alternately raising and depressing the men of genius whom he chose to patronize, but Scott thinks that this sudden revulsion of feeling towards Dryden was partly attributable to the poet's attachment to Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire, then Rochester's rival in wit and court-favour, and by whom he had been posted as a coward for refusing to fight him. But it does not appear quite clear that this circumstance had then taken place. At all events, Rochester had determined to attempt to lower Dryden in the opinion of the public, and for this purpose made use of Elkanah Settle. Settle had produced his first play, "Cambyses, King of Persia," in 1671, which was acted six nights successively. This run of public favour gave Rochester some pretence for bringing him before the notice of the king. By his efforts, Settle's second play, "The Empress

of Morocco," was acted with overpowering applause for a month together. To add to Dryden's mortification, Rochester had interest enough to have the tragedy first acted at Whitehall by the lords and ladies of the Court. On its first representation there Lord Mulgrave wrote the prologue, and that on the second occasion was contributed by Rochester himself; both were spoken by the beautiful Lady Elizabeth Howard. This was the more galling to Dryden, as none of his plays, however more justly entitled to it, both by his situation of poet laureate and from intrinsic merit, had had accorded to them this honour. From the Court the play was transferred to the theatre in Dorset Garden, and received with the applause corresponding to the expectation excited by its favour at Whitehall. Settle, intoxicated with his sudden elevation, and attributing his success to his own merits, published the play with a dedication to the Earl of Norwich, defiantly levelled at the laureate. It was "adorned with sculptures;" the price was two shillings, being double the ordinary charge; and the title announced the writer to be "Elkanah Settle, *Servant to his Majesty*," an addition which belonged with greater propriety to Dryden.*

It is to be regretted that Dryden did not treat this triumph of a fool, as Mr. Mitford calls it, with contemptuous silence. The "sculptures," however—as Settle's play was the first that had been embellished with such ornaments—seem to have given him great disturbance; the advance in the price, the dedication of defiance, were too much

* Scott.

for his patience, and he united with Shadwell and Crowne in printing some remarks on the "Empress of Morocco." Dr. Johnson has given copious extracts from this criticism, "to which the genius of Dryden could be reduced between rage and terror —rage with little provocation, and terror with little danger." It would have been well for his fame had the pamphlet been suppressed. Settle answered it, says Mr. Mitford, and left his antagonist covered with the dust and dirt of a degrading and injudicious controversy. From this time Rochester became Dryden's avowed enemy, and lost no opportunity of attacking his literary reputation. Nor did Dryden treat these attacks with indifference. It is true that he does not seem to have thought it worth his while to take his revenge on Rochester by name, or any direct allusion—perhaps the recollection of former kindnesses influenced him—yet a severe censure of the persons of wit and honour about town, in the preface to "All for Love," in 1678, seems particularly aimed at him. The malice of Rochester at length culminated in the cruel and cowardly attack on Dryden in Rose Alley, in 1679, which we shall notice under that year.

In 1674 Dryden published his "State of Innocence," a play adapted from Milton's "Paradise Lost," but not intended for stage exhibition. Milton died on the 8th of November, 1674, and Dryden's opera, as he styles it himself, was published immediately after his death. The two poets had long been acquainted, perhaps even before the Restoration. The great poem of "Paradise Lost,"

however, it is well known, was received with coldness on its first publication. "The character of the author, obnoxious for his share in the usurped government; the turn of language, so different from that of the age; the seriousness of a subject so discordant with its lively frivolities, gave to the author's renown the slowness of growth with the permanency of the oak."* Aubrey relates a somewhat apocryphal story that Dryden waited on the blind bard, and asked his permission to put his great poem into rhyme. "Ay," said Milton, "you may tag my verses if you will." Dennis also tells us "Mr. Dryden at that time knew not half his excellence, as more than twenty years afterwards he confessed to me, and is pretty plain from his writing the 'State of Innocence.'" It is strange that Dryden should have made such a confession, when, in his preface, he acknowledges the original to be "undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced." "The composition is addressed to the Princess of Modena, then Duchess of York, in a strain of flattery which disgraces genius, and which it was wonderful that any man that knew the meaning of his own words could use without self-detestation. It is an attempt to mingle earth and heaven, by praising human excellence in the language of religion."† The work was a hasty production, thrown off in a month, and the author gives a very ridiculous reason for its publication: "I was induced to it in my own defence, many hundred

* Scott. † Johnson.

copies of it being dispersed abroad without my knowledge or consent; so that every one gathering new faults, it became at length a libel against me." "These copies," Johnson observes, "as they gathered faults, were apparently manuscript; and he lived in an age very unlike ours, if many hundred copies of fourteen hundred lines were likely to be transcribed. An author has a right to print his own works, and need not seek an apology in falsehood; but he that could bear to write the dedication, felt no pain in writing the preface." Nat. Lee prefixed some outrageous lines to the publication, in which he compliments Dryden on its being "the best poem that he ever wrought," and talks of his having refined the golden ore of Milton! We can feel for the extravagances of Lee, but we can hardly tolerate Dryden's self-sufficiency in permitting the lines to appear. The only ground upon which we can grant any pardon to Dryden for this tasteless performance is that it called attention to the neglected original, and thus contributed in no slight degree to Milton's fame. Milton, as we have seen, had died before the publication of the "State of Innocence," and "we may wish in vain," as Scott says, "to know his opinion; but if tradition can be trusted, he said, perhaps on that undertaking, that Dryden was a good rhymer, but no poet." This opinion of so great an authority may need attention hereafter.

We have arrived at an eventful stage in the poet's life, for from henceforth there is a marked change in his taste and composition. In the spring of 1675 was acted "Aureng-zebe," the

last of his so-styled heroic plays. He acknowledges in the Prologue that he had "grown weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme." Johnson thinks that "Aureng-zebe" has the appearance of being the most elaborate of all his dramas. "The complaint of life (Act iv. sc. 1) is celebrated, and there are many other passages that may be read with pleasure." "Aureng-zebe," on its publication in 1676, was dedicated to Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire. Mulgrave was then a young man of twenty-seven. This dedication, though containing a passage of gross and ill-applied flattery to Charles II, is very interesting, as first discovering to us that Dryden entertained a design of writing an epic poem. "Some little hopes," he says, "I have yet remaining (and those, too, considering my abilities, may be vain) that I may make the world some part of amends for many ill plays, by an heroic poem. Your lordship has long been acquainted with my design, the subject of which you know is great; the story English, and neither too far distant from the present age, nor too near approaching it." He mentions also that he had discussed it with the king and the Duke of York. We learn from the dedication to his "Juvenal," that he hesitated between two subjects—King Arthur conquering the Saxons, or Edward the Black Prince subduing Spain and restoring it to Don Pedro the Cruel. He was discouraged, however, he tells us, by receiving only fair words from King Charles, and by poverty—his little salary being ill-paid, and no prospect of a future subsistence. The

burning of the King's Theatre, and the debts contracted in rebuilding it, had materially altered his private circumstances for the worse at this period.

Dryden's next play, "All for Love, or the World well lost," a tragedy founded on the story of "Antony and Cleopatra," was produced at the King's House in the winter of 1677-8. He styles it the "only play written for himself, the rest were given to the people." "In my style," he says, "I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare; which that I may perform more freely, I have dismembered myself from rhyme. Not that I condemn my former way, but that this is more proper to my present purpose." He adds: "I hope I may affirm, and without vanity, that, by imitating him, I have excelled myself throughout the play; and particularly, that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius, in the first act, to anything which I have written in this kind." The criticisms on this play have placed it in the foremost rank of Dryden's dramatic writings. Dr. Johnson specially commends the prologue and epilogue for their elegance and sprightliness. Scott has given an elaborate review of its merits. It was received with universal approbation, and contributed not only to its author's fame, but to his fortune also, as he was permitted the benefit of a third night, in addition to his profits as a sharer with the company. In the same year (1678) he brought out at Dorset Garden a comedy entitled, "Limberham, or the Kind Keeper." It was prohibited after the third night. It was designed,

as we are told, against "the crying sin of keeping," and, Langbaine informs us, gave umbrage to the greater part of the town, because it exposed their mode of living. But let us hope that its own gross indelicacy was sufficient cause for its expulsion. It is not deficient in wit, but its licentiousness, even in its printed form, is repulsive enough; and yet we are told that Lord Bolingbroke found, in "the sweepings of Pope's study," a copy in which a pen had been drawn through several exceptionable passages that do not appear in the printed play! In the winter of this year (1678-9) the tragedy of "Œdipus" appeared at the same theatre, as the joint production of Dryden and Lee. Dryden wrote the first and third acts, and planned the scenes. While giving Dryden every praise for his share in this play, Sir Walter Scott justly observes that the disagreeable nature of the plot forms an objection to its success upon a British stage. There are noble passages, and, as the same critic remarks, "the ghost of Laius can only be paralleled in Shakespeare." It would seem hardly necessary to criticise the adaptation (if we may so term it) of Shakespeare's "Troilus and Cressida," which was acted and published in 1679. "So far as this play," says Scott, "is to be considered as an alteration of Shakespeare, I fear it must be allowed, that our author has suppressed some of his finest poetry, and exaggerated some of his worst faults." Dryden prefixed to this play an excellent discourse on the "Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy," in which are laid down some just critical rules, and he does not spare his own

faults. Like all his prefaces and dedications, this cannot be read without pleasure and instruction, but it may be questioned whether the reader would derive much satisfaction from a perusal of the play itself, though Langbaine does specially commend the last scene in the third act as "a masterpiece."

An event in Dryden's life which marks the close of this year (1679) must lead us, at the risk of the charge of tediousness, to retrace our steps for a short period, and to interrupt the narrative of his literary productions. It will be remembered that in 1673 Dryden was on such terms of friendship with Rochester, that he dedicated to him his favourite play of "Marriage à la Mode," and that his lordship's reception of the dedication called forth a second acknowledgment of the poet's gratitude. From some unexplained cause, probably merely from Rochester's capricious and jealous temper, their friendship soon underwent a change. It could hardly have arisen from Dryden's attachment to Mulgrave, as Rochester and Mulgrave, though rivals in wit and fashion, were at this period on good terms. Their subsequent quarrel may have aggravated Rochester's ill-feeling towards Dryden. To mortify Dryden, Rochester brought forward Elkanah Settle. Through his influence, Settle's play of "The Empress of Morocco" was acted at Whitehall by the lords and ladies of the Court; Mulgrave contributing a prologue on the first appearance, and Rochester himself that on the second occasion. We have already alluded to the annoyance that Dryden felt at this

elevation of Settle. But the poetaster's triumph was of short duration. He was speedily dethroned to give place to another of Rochester's short-lived favourites. In 1675, through the influence of Rochester, Crowne's masque of "Calisto" was similarly acted at Court. This was even a more severe blow to Dryden, for it was his duty as laureate to write on such occasions. Though intrinsically unworthy of success, "the splendour of the scenery and dresses, the quality of the performers, selected from the first nobility, and the favour of the sovereign, gave 'Calisto' a run of nearly thirty nights. Dryden, though mortified, tendered his services in the shape of an epilogue, to be spoken by Lady Henrietta Wentworth. But the influence of his enemy (Rochester) was still predominant, and the epilogue of the laureate was rejected."*

Crowne, in his turn, gave place to one who might have been a more formidable rival to Dryden. In 1676, Otway's "Don Carlos" appeared, and the author acknowledges, in his preface, that much of its success was owing to Rochester's recommendation to the king. In the same preface there is a defiance to Dryden. Otway, however, soon experienced Rochester's fickleness, and was grossly insulted and lampooned in the "Session of the Poets." But Rochester did not confine himself to raising up rivals to Dryden. In 1678 he published, anonymously, an imitation of Horace, styled "An Allusion to the Tenth Satire." This was universally recognized as his.

* Scott.

Here he indirectly attacks Dryden, and satirises his late favourites, Settle, Crowne, and Otway. In the meanwhile Rochester had quarrelled with Mulgrave, and been posted as a coward by the latter. Dryden and Mulgrave were on very friendly terms, and in 1675 (the year in which "Aurengzebe" was acted) his lordship had entrusted to the poet the task of revising his "Essay upon Satire." This poem, in which many of the courtiers of the time were severely handled, more especially Sir Car Scrope and Rochester, was not made public till 1679, when several copies were handed about in manuscript. In sending one of these to his friend Henry Saville, Rochester writes: "I have sent you herewith a libel, in which my own share is not the least; the king having perused it, is in no ways dissatisfied with his. The author is apparent Mr. D——, his patron my Lord M—— having a panegyric in the midst." It may be questioned whether Dryden did more than correct a few passages in Mulgrave's work, but it would seem that Rochester was only too willing to ascribe the authorship to him, and at once formed the design of a revenge, which, astonishing as it may appear at the present day, was not without its precedent in the then state of society. On the 18th of December, 1679, as Dryden was returning from Will's Coffee House, through Rose Street, Covent Garden, he was waylaid by a set of hired ruffians, who severely cudgelled him. As might be expected, a reward was offered in the papers of the day for the discovery of the perpetrators. It was pretty well known that Rochester was the

instigator of this outrage, and another letter of his to Saville, in which, after alluding to "a certain poet," he says, "I will forgive him if you please, *and leave the repartee to Black Will with a cudgel*," seems to fix the charge upon him. It has been generally supposed the Duchess of Portsmouth (Louise de Querouaille), one of Charles's mistresses, joined him in instigating this attack upon Dryden. She certainly must have been greatly exasperated at the severe lines upon her in Mulgrave's "Satire." The Rose Alley ambuscade, instead of exciting commiseration towards Dryden, only supplied a new theme for the scurrilities of his enemies. Much to his credit, it does not appear that he condescended to take revenge upon Rochester; and the grave soon interposed between further quarrels, as Rochester died in July of the following year. Dryden's only allusion to him is in the dedication of the translation of "Juvenal" to Lord Dorset, where, in speaking of "Satire," he says, "In that, an author of your own quality (whose ashes I will not disturb) has given you all the commendation which his self-sufficiency could afford to any man."

The first publication to which the poet's name appeared, after this incident, was that of a translation of the "Epistles of Ovid," to which he contributed an interesting preface, and versions of two of the Epistles (Canace to Macareus, and Dido to Æneas); and a third (Helen to Paris) was written in conjunction with Lord Mulgrave. This work, published in 1680, was his first essay at translation. There had, indeed, appeared a trans-

lation of "Appian" in 1679, the dedication of which to Lord Ossory is signed J. D., and which is usually styled "Dryden's Appian" in catalogues; but Scott supposes this to have been the work of Jonathan Dryden, who, though of Trinity College, Cambridge, and a scholar on the Westminster Foundation, does not seem to have been a relative of the poet. We have no further production of Dryden's in this year (1680) with the exception of two or three prologues to the plays of other writers, in which he banteringly alludes to the so-styled Popish plot which was occupying public attention. The following year (1681), however, was marked by two of his most successful works. "The Spanish Friar," a tragi-comedy, and the celebrated satire of "Absalom and Achitophel," are each in their way landmarks in his literary life. The play, which has been styled one of the happiest and best of Dryden's numerous dramatic efforts, seems to have been acted in the season of 1681-2. In his dedication to Lord Haughton, he says he "recommends a protestant play to a protestant patron." To criticise it in detail will not be necessary. Those who may desire so to do had better consult Scott's, to us, somewhat too favourable notice. It was written and acted at a time when the nation was rabid about Oates's supposed plot, and this may account for the tumultuous applause with which it was greeted. That the author of such a work should so soon become a convert to the religion he here, we would almost say, libels, is one of those phenomena which surpass our comprehension, but for a repetition of

which we have only to look to the present age. "The Spanish Friar" met with a curious fate. It was the only drama prohibited by James II, after his accession; and singularly enough, it was the first play represented by order of Queen Mary after the Revolution, and honoured with her presence; "a choice," says Scott, "of which she had abundant reason to repent, as the serious part of the piece gave as much scope for malicious application against herself, as the comic against the religion of her father." This remarkable circumstance is detailed by Malone and Scott, and the reader may turn to their pages to satisfy his curiosity.

But now we have arrived at a most important period in Dryden's literary career. Hitherto his controversies were merely of a personal character, arising from the jealousies of his rivals. Now he was about to enter into the political arena, and at one bound to assume that position as a writer of satire in which he has never been surpassed, and rarely, if ever, equalled. It will surely be unnecessary to enter into the details of a period of history so well known as that which gave rise to Dryden's celebrated satire. The intrigues of Monmouth and Shaftesbury for the exclusion of the Duke of York's right of succession, the popular excitement at the Duke's avowed Popery, aggravated by the late supposed plot, led to continued disputes between the king and the parliament on the Exclusion Bill. Shaftesbury in vain endeavoured to persuade the king to conciliate parliament by a proposal to settle the succession on

Monmouth. To this Charles would not consent, and on March 28, 1681, the bill of exclusion was once more brought in and read a first time. The king who had foreseen, and was prepared for, the emergency, instantly dissolved Parliament, and followed up the step by a prosecution of all who had taken an active part in the agitation against the duke. On the 2nd of July Shaftesbury was committed to the Tower on a charge of subornation and treason. The press was busied with hosts of scribblers against the king, the duke, and the ministry; and their effusions were read and sung and applauded throughout the kingdom. A writer was required on the royal side, especially to prejudice the public mind against Shaftesbury previously to the bill of indictment being preferred. Dryden, by his position as laureate, his talents, and probably his predilections, was well qualified for the task. His friends, too, Ormond, Halifax, and Hyde, Earl of Rochester, were on the royal side; opposed to it were Buckingham (author of the "Rehearsal"), Shadwell, and Settle. He had conciliated the Duke of York by a prologue on his visiting the theatre at his return from Scotland, and by the omission of many of the offensive passages in the "Spanish Friar." He now sat down to write the satire of "Absalom and Achitophel," and on Nov. 17, 1681, a few days before the bill of indictment against Shaftesbury was presented, it was published. Its success was beyond example, but it did not effect its immediate object. The bill against Shaftesbury was ignored by the grand jury, and the populace received his acquittal

with shouts of triumph. Dr. Johnson relates that his father, who was a bookseller, told him that its sale exceeded anything in his remembrance, excepting that of Sacheverel's famous Trial. "The allusions which it contained became universally known; and the allegorical names seemed to be inalienably entailed upon the persons to whom Dryden had assigned them. Not only were they in perpetual use amongst the court poets of the day, but the parable was repeatedly inculcated and preached upon from the pulpit, and echoed and re-echoed in all the addresses of the time." The poem was first published in a folio form, "printed for J. T. (Jacob Tonson), and are to be sold by W. Davis, in Amen Corner." Malone (in a MS. note to the copy of his 'Prose Works of Dryden,' in the Bodley Library,) thinks Tonson probably concealed his name from an apprehension that Shaftesbury and his partisans might do him some prejudice in his business. But this would have been but a futile precaution, as the authorship was immediately recognised, and Tonson's initials would have been equally intelligible. Attacks upon Dryden instantly appeared. Though the poem was only published about Nov. 17, 1681, as early as December 10th a miserable Grub-street production, entitled "Towser the Second," supposed to be written by Henry Care, sprung up. This was followed on the fourteenth of the same month by "Poetical Reflections on a late poem entitled Absalom and Achitophel, by a Person of Honour," who, according to Antony Wood, was Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. A Nonconformist

clergyman (whose name, fortunately for him, is unknown) published about ten days afterwards a pamphlet termed "A Whip for the Fool's Back," and followed it up with the "Key (with the Whip) to open the mystery and iniquity of the poem called Absalom and Achitophel;" and these were subsequently succeeded by "Azariah and Hushai," by Samuel Pordage, a scribbler who had written two dramas and translated a third from Seneca; and finally our author's old antagonist, Elkanah Settle, appeared with a folio pamphlet of 1,500 lines, entitled "Absalom Senior, or Absalom and Achitophel transposed, a poem;" in which he is said to have been assisted by Sprat. It might seem hardly necessary to mention these scurrilous productions by name, but it may be interesting in a bibliographical point of view; and, moreover, Dryden himself slightly alluded to Pordage and Settle in his subsequent writings. A second edition of "Absalom and Achitophel" was issued in December, in quarto, and was speedily followed by many more. In this second edition twelve lines were added, mollifying the satire against Shaftesbury by doing justice to his judicial integrity, a portion of which deserves to be quoted—

> "Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
> The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
> In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abethdin
> With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean;
> Unbrib'd, unsought, the wretched to redress;
> Swift of dispatch, and easy of access."

A report was circulated that this addition was made in consequence of Shaftesbury's having con-

ferred a favour upon Dryden (by placing his son at the Charterhouse) in the interval between the first and second edition of "Absalom and Achitophel," but this has been satisfactorily refuted. A passage of kind wishes towards Monmouth was also added in the second edition—

> "But, oh that yet he would repent and live!
> How easy 'tis for parents to forgive;
> With how few fears a pardon might be won,
> From nature pleading for a darling son!"

These, and other passages, in which Dryden has softened the severity of his muse, evince not only the poet's taste and judgment, but that tone of honourable and just feeling which distinguishes a true satire from a libellous lampoon."* So popular was the poem that two Latin versions were speedily published, one by Atterbury, and a second by William Coward, M.D., of Merton College, Oxon, quarto, 1682. In concluding the remarks on this famous satire, it may only be added that Tate (who was probably a competent authority) relates that it was undertaken at the desire of Charles II. and Malone supposes that Dryden was employed on it about nine months. Scott has shown that the application of the Scriptural names to modern history did not originate with Dryden. "Not only had the scheme of a similar poem been contrived, but the very passage of Scripture adopted by Dryden as the foundation of his parable, had been already applied to Charles and his undutiful son." (See "Absalom's Conspiracy, or the Tragedy of Treason," 1680, and other works, in Scott's

* Scott.

Dryden, vol. ix. p. 199.) To detain the reader by a detailed criticism after Dr. Johnson's well-known remarks, and the equally acute observations of Sir Walter Scott, would be at once useless and impertinent. "Absalom and Achitophel" is one of those great national works with which every educated man must be familiar, and he who is ignorant of the episode in history to which it refers would hardly be enlightened by an elaborate analysis of its merits, and the appropriateness of its satire.

The grand jury having ignored the bill of high treason against Shaftesbury, he was liberated from the Tower Nov. 24, 1681. To celebrate this event, a medal was struck, bearing the head and name of Shaftesbury, and on the reverse a sun obscured with a cloud rising over the Tower of London, with the date of the acquittal, and the legend, *Lætamur*. His partisans ostentatiously wore these, and care was taken that they should be made as general as possible. It might be expected that the author of "Absalom and Achitophel" would not permit Shaftesbury's popular triumph to be of long duration. It is said, indeed, that the king himself suggested to Dryden the idea of taking the medal as a subject for his satire, and, on the completion of the poem, rewarded the writer with a hundred broad-pieces. But be this as it may, on March 16, 1681-2, he published anonymously "The Medal, a Satire against Sedition." The personality of the satire was exhaustive; not a point in Shaftesbury's character, moral or political, was left uncensured. The severity of the poet, however, betrayed him

into many expressions and lines which are painfully open to the charge, so often brought against him, of irreverence and profanity. As a satire, it may be perfect, and we do not wish to criticise the abilities of the artist. It has been thought that it hurried to a conclusion the career of its object. The appearance of "Absalom and Achitophel," as has been shown, was hailed by a shower of lampoons and low replies, but Dryden does not seem to have thought it worth his notice to answer them. As might be imagined, the "Medal" immediately received its share of scurrility and abuse, and chiefly from the same authors. Pordage came forward with "The Medal Revised;" Hickeringill, now rector of All Saints, Colchester, but a fanatical puritan of Cromwell's day, and notorious for his songs, pamphlets, and sermons, rushed to the attack with "The Mushroom," sent to press the very day on which the "Medal" appeared; a circumstance on which the author valued himself so highly as to ascribe it to Divine inspiration! "Dryden's Satire to his Muse" was imputed to Lord Somers, but positively disowned by him in a conversation with Pope. Shadwell's reply is entitled "The Medal of John Bayes," and surpassed in scurrility the most scurrilous of its contemporaries. Dryden had received many provocations from Shadwell, and the venomous personality of this attack from one whom he had once called friend seems to have roused his slumbering vengeance upon his slanderers. Shadwell was, therefore, selected for signal castigation, and on 4th October, 1682, was

published, "Mac-Flecknoe; or, a Satire on the True-blue Protestant Poet, T. S. By the Author of Absalom and Achitophel." It consisted only of one sheet and a half, and was sold for two-pence. This crushing satire was eagerly bought up, and the whole impression is said to have been exhausted in a few days. Richard Flecknoe, from whom the piece takes its title, was an Irish Roman Catholic priest, and so noted as a miserable writer of doggerel, that his name had become almost proverbial. He is supposed to have died about 1678. Dryden represents Shadwell as Mac-Flecknoe, or the son of Flecknoe, and his successor on the throne of dulness. Personal to the last degree as the satire is, and was meant to be, it is no slight merit that it has survived its immediate interest. Its vigour and keenness, its skilful versification, and, if we may so say, its simplicity of object, give it a far superiority over the "Dunciad," and a host of other avowed successors. Shadwell seems to have been more mortified by his misconception of Dryden's representing him as an Irishman than with the real severity of the satire, and he declared that Dryden had denied to him that he was the writer of the poem; but this can hardly be the case. It is possible he might not have avowed its authorship, though that is not probable, as the title too plainly announced it. Mr. Bell has justly observed that posterity has judged too harshly upon Shadwell's merits from the severity of this satire. Coarse and vulgar though he may be, in the lower walks of comedy he excelled even Dryden himself; and in depicting the manners and

habits of his day " he brings us more closely acquainted with the actual life of the time than those of any other dramatist, with the single exception of Etheredge." Had he not by his insane envy provoked the lash of Dryden, he might have maintained a respectable position amongst the writers of a not very respectable age. But Dryden had not yet done with Shadwell. The success of his previous satires of " Absalom and Achitophel " and the " Medal," now enhanced by " Mac-Flecknoe," was rapidly followed up by a second part of " Absalom and Achitophel." This was published on the 10th November, 1682. The brief interval that had occurred between the publication of " Mac-Flecknoe " and this poem could have hardly given Shadwell time to have recovered from his painful astonishment before he was again impaled with a ten-fold severity. But it is hardly necessary to criticise the second part of " Absalom and Achitophel." The chief part of the poem was written, it is said, by Dryden's suggestion, by Nahum Tate, and Dryden contributed but about 200 verses, besides a general revision of the whole. It is true that Tate's poem falls far short of the original, but yet it appears to us to have been more harshly judged than it deserves. The subject was worn out, and the times had changed. Still Dryden's portion is as vigorous as ever, and the characters of Shadwell and Settle, as Og and Doeg, are painted " in the liveliest colours that his poignant satire could afford." Tate is so associated with his companion Brady in his attempt to translate, or transfer into rhyme, those most per-

fect and (as the attempts of all others have proved) most untranslateable poems, the Psalms, that we are apt to look upon him with contempt. It is the fashion, therefore, to speak of this poem with a sneer at Tate's portion, and a high eulogium of Dryden's more vigorous interpolation. But the lack of popularity that attended its publication is not solely to be attributed to the flatness and mediocrity of Tate; the subject had lost its freshness. But while Dryden had thus condescended to use the assistance of Tate, he had not himself been idle. In the same month (November, 1682) he published his "Religio Laici," the least popular of all his poems. We may, perhaps, with Scott, more fitly examine the poem when we shall have to contrast it with the "Hind and Panther," a few years later in the poet's life. In the preface he professes to have written it for "an ingenious young gentleman," the translator of Simon's "Critical History of the Old Testament." This probably is a mere excuse, and the real object was political. Religious controversy, as Scott observes, had mingled deeply with the party politics of the reign of Charles II. The nation was divided into the three great parties of Churchmen, Papists, and Dissenters. The king was pressed on the one side by the Duke of York and the Popish party to the most desperate measures, and, on the other, "the popular faction were just not in arms." It appears probable that Dryden availed himself of this opportunity to explain the tenets and defend the character of the National Church, and thus strengthen his royal master's hands; or it is not

impossible that he may have received a royal hint or command, as upon other occasions. Johnson, however, while somewhat extravagantly eulogising the poem, considers it a voluntary effusion. It is not necessary to suppose that the author did not write from conviction, or speak his real sentiments; it is probable that Dryden spoke what was his then serious and firm belief; but this does not lessen the impression that the poem was written for a political purpose. It was received very coldly, and, though Scott mentions a second edition in 1683, which he met with in Mr. Heber's library, it does not appear to have been reprinted during the author's lifetime. Active, however, as he had been this year with his pen in political partizanship, he found time to yield to the request of his friend, Nat. Lee, to assist him in a play. Lee had aided Dryden in the Tragedy of "Œdipus," and now claimed the poet's promise of a requital of the obligation. Their united efforts produced the tragedy of the "Duke of Guise." In the vindication of the play, Dryden tells us he had written, so far back as 1662, a drama on the story, which had been privately condemned by his friends, who, while acknowledging the excellence of the subject, found fault with its execution. The state of affairs now, however, seemed so exact a parallel to the history of the "League," that the two poets naturally availed themselves of the story. Yet there were points in the analogy which were likely to be unpleasing to the king, who, as ever, felt great love for Monmouth. The play, therefore, though ready before Midsummer, was not licensed

for representation for some months. In the meanwhile the king had authorized the arrest of Monmouth at Stafford, and the Duke of York's influence at Court became daily stronger. At length on Dec. 4, 1682, the "Duke of Guise" was represented. It was subsequently printed, with a dedication to Hyde, Earl of Rochester, subscribed by both authors, but evidently the work of Dryden. The play, itself, like the dedication, has a violent political bias. As might be expected, it met with determined resistance from the Whig party, even though the king personally countenanced the representation. Like all Dryden's productions, too, it was attacked by pamphleteers, his old antagonist, Shadwell, amongst the rest; and the poet thought it necessary to reply in a "Vindication of the Duke of Guise," in which he finally took revenge upon his corpulent antagonist. Soon after this he prefixed a preface and a life of the author, to a new translation of Plutarch's Lives, by several hands, the first volume of which was published in 1683. It was dedicated to the Duke of Ormond, the Barzillai of "Absalom and Achitophel." Amongst the contributors appears the illustrious name of Somers. The translation, though neither close, accurate, nor elegant, has not, as Mr. Mitford thinks, been superseded by Langhorne's. The late Mr. A. H. Clough, a name familiar to scholars, recently reproduced it in a revised form. Langhorne's Plutarch, spruce and finical as it is, conveys no notion of the original, and is not even comparable to the refreshing and noble version of old Sir Thomas North, in Eliza-

bethan days, who avowedly translated from the French of Amyot.

About the same time, at the king's express command, he translated Maimbourg's "History of the League," a work designedly composed to draw a parallel between the Huguenots of France and the Leaguers, as both equal enemies of the monarchy. "The comparison," says Scott, "was easily transferred to the sectaries of England, and the association proposed by Shaftesbury. The work was published with unusual solemnity of title-page and frontispiece; the former declaring that the translation was made by his majesty's command, the latter representing Charles on his throne surrounded by emblems expressive of hereditary and indefeasible right. In the dedication to the king are expressions of strong party violence, and even ferocity. The forgiving disposition of the king, he says, encouraged the conspirators. Like Antæus, they rise refreshed from a simple overthrow. 'These sons of earth are never to be trusted in their mother element; *they must be hoisted into the air, and strangled.*'" This translation was destined to be the last service that Dryden was to render to his royal master. Charles died, February 6, 1684-5. In the meanwhile, to increase his now straitened circumstances, straitened through the non-payment of his salary among other causes, the poet had recourse to the publication of a volume of Miscellanies, consisting of translations of portions of Theocritus, Virgil, Horace, united with prologues, epilogues, and some of the most beautiful minor poems of the age. The first volume

of the Miscellanies, published by Tonson, appeared in 1684, and was followed at various intervals in the poet's life by three others, to which the publisher added two more after Dryden's death. In 1715, Tonson published, in six volumes, a new and altered edition, the one now in common use. It is remarkable that the Miscellany appeared without preface or dedication. We will pause at the death of Charles, and endeavour to obtain some insight into the poet's life at this period. A letter to Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, second son of Lord Chancellor Clarendon, written probably at the end of the year 1683, or, as Mr. Bell more correctly conjectures, in the spring of 1684, gives us a painful picture of Dryden's necessities and neglect. Rochester was First Commissioner of the Treasury, and continued such till September, 1684. It may, perhaps, be interesting to give the letter in full.

"My Lord,

"I know not whether my Lord Sunderland has interceded with your lordship for half a yeare of my salary; but I have two other advocates, my extreme wants, even almost to arresting, and my ill-health, which cannot be repaired without immediate retireing into the country. A quarter's allowance is but the Jesuit's powder to my disease; the fit will return a fortnight hence. If I durst, I would plead a little merit, and some hazards of my life from the common enemyes; my refuseing advantages offered by them, and neglecting my beneficiall studyes for the king's service: but I only thinke I merit not to sterve. I never applyed myselfe to any interest con-

trary to your lordship's; and on some occasions, perhaps not known to you, have not been unserviceable to the memory and reputation of my lord, your father. After this, my lord, my conscience assures me, I may write boldly, though I cannot speake to you. I have three sonns growing to man's estate; I breed them all up to learning, beyond my fortune; but they are too hopeful to be neglected, though I want. Be pleased to looke on me with an eye of compassion. Some small employment would render my condition easy. The king is not unsatisfied of me; the Duke has often promised me his assistance; and your lordship is the conduit through which they passe; either in the Customes or the Appeals of the Excise, or some other way, meanes cannot be wanting, if you please to have the will. Tis enough for one age to have neglected Mr. Cowley, and sterved Mr. Butler; but neither of them had the happiness to live till your lordship's ministry. In the meane time, be pleased to give me a gracious and speedy answer to my present request of halfe a yeare's pension for my necessityes. I am going to write somewhat by his majesty's command, and cannot stir into the country for my health and studies, till I secure my family from want. You have many petitions of this nature, and cannot satisfy all; but I hope, from your goodness, to be made an exception to your general rules, because I am, with all sincerity,

"Your lordship's

"Most obedient humble servant,

"JOHN DRYDEN."

The application, to a certain extent, was successful, and Mr. Bell publishes for the first time a document, which throws much light on the

poet's history, and removes some of the suspicion which attaches to his subsequent conversion to Popery. It is a Treasury warrant, signed by Rochester and others, and dated May 6, 1684, addressed to Sir Robert Howard, auditor of the Exchequer, authorising the payment to Dryden of £50, one quarter's annuity or pension (as poet laureate) due at Midsummer, 1680, and also the sum of £25, being one quarter's additional annuity by Letters of Privy Seal, due at Lady Day, 1680. This document Mr. Bell prints by permission of Mr. Charles Beville Dryden, in whose possession it now is. Now it is clear from this paper that there were upwards of four years of the poet's salary as laureate in arrear, and that he had also an annuity of £100 (equally in arrear) granted by Charles. It is to this additional annuity that attention should be given. Upon the death of Charles, on Feb. 5, 1684-5, it might have been expected that his successor would not have overlooked the claims of Dryden, to whom he was so greatly indebted, and to whom (as we have seen in the poet's letter to Rochester) he had so often promised assistance. Macaulay, however, discovered that in the new patent to the laureateship, rendered necessary by the demise of the Crown, James had directed that the annual butt of Canary should be discontinued. This was only one of those petty meannesses so characteristic of him. After a whole year's delay, and then probably through the intercession of powerful friends at Court, Dryden's claims were recognized by what was virtually a resumption of the

annuity granted by Charles. On March 4th, 1685-6, letters patent were granted, adding £100 to his pension as laureate and historiographer, on the express ground of his services to the late king, as well as to James. As has been well pointed out, the grant had a retrospective clause, covering the whole arrears from Charles's death, as the first payment was to commence from the 25th March preceding. Thus the patent was in reality a renewal of the former lapsed gratuity. Mr. Bell deserves the thanks of Dryden's admirers for thus materially clearing up a point of suspicion, namely, that Dryden's conversion to Popery was influenced by this pension, as a mark of James's favour. It is needless to refer to Macaulay's assertion that "finding that if he continued to call himself a Protestant his services would be overlooked, he declared himself a Papist. The king's parsimony instantly relaxed. Dryden was gratified with a pension of £100 a year, and was employed to defend his new religion both in prose and verse." The reader will have seen the pension preceded the conversion, and was clearly a renewal of an act of Charles instead of a gratuity on the part of James. This is only another instance of the untrustworthiness of Macaulay as a historian whenever his political passions are opposed to facts. But we have delayed too long on a point to which we must shortly recur. Our object was to show that at the death of King Charles, Dryden, to whom his majesty and the Court party were so deeply indebted for aid which no other pen could have afforded, was living at

the pinnacle indeed of fame, but in very straitened circumstances, chiefly from the non-payment of his two salaries. It is not improbable that the expenses of educating his sons, and maintaining his position in society, may have much enhanced his difficulties, yet it cannot be denied that the neglect by his party of a man of such transcendent abilities is a sad reproach to the age. The application, however, to Government for the small place in the Excise, which was afterwards given by Halifax to Addison, and similar to that held by Locke, does not seem to be very degrading to a man even of Dryden's position.

The death of Charles cannot be said to have affected Dryden's prospects for worse. The king had, indeed, always treated the poet with kindness and promises, but the promises never seem to have been fulfilled by any substantial reward. While incredible sums were lavished out of the public exchequer upon the royal mistresses, the poor paltry stipend of the laureate was left considerably in arrear. It is not to be wondered at, then, that the accession of James was hailed by Dryden, in common with many others, with the hope of better things. His pen had been frequently employed in the Duke of York's behalf, and that prince had not unfrequently promised him support. The "Threnodia Augustalis" at once, says Scott, paid a tribute to the memory of the deceased monarch, and decently solicited the attention of his successor. Having said all that was decently mournful over the bier of Charles, he turned his lyrics to a sounding close in praise

of James. The poem, though popular, and running through two editions in 1685, is unworthy of Dryden. He seems to have laboured at it as a task; it is cold and devoid of feeling; yet Scott thinks it has been under-rated. In the same year appeared an ode to the memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew. Dr. Johnson, in one place, compares it to the famous ode on St. Cecilia's Day, and, in another, calls it undoubtedly the noblest ode that our language has ever produced! But Joseph Warton has pronounced a very different opinion. There may, indeed, be some beautiful images in it, and a few fine lines, but it is greatly disfigured by violent metaphors and absurd conceits. In fact, we may pronounce upon it a criticism which will apply pretty well to all the so-styled Pindarics of the seventeenth century—they have some beauties, but many more blemishes, and the writers seem to have considered themselves at liberty to indulge in the wildest extravagances, the most unnatural and forced conceits, and the grossest bad taste.

The new hopes of Dryden induced him to resume the opera of "Albion and Albanius," upon which he had been employed before the death of Charles. Like many of his plays, it had been written with a political design, to celebrate the restoration of the Stuarts, their escape from the Rye-house Plot, and the recent conquest over their Whig opponents. Although the king had died during the rehearsal of the opera, it required but little to alter it. The apotheosis of Albion, and the succession of Albanius to the uncontrolled

domination of a willing people, adapted it to the new state of things. It was prepared for the stage with great expense, and the music was entrusted to Louis Grabut, the master of the king's band, whom Charles preferred to Purcell. The music was admitted to be very indifferent; yet Dryden, in the preface to the play, gave great offence by extolling the composer, in a passage which was supposed to contain an oblique reflection on Purcell and other English composers. A strange fatality attended the play. Stopped, as we have seen, by the death of Charles, it had only run five nights when the news of Monmouth's landing reached London while it was being acted for the sixth time. The audience immediately broke up in consternation, and the piece was never again repeated. It was of no service to the poet's reputation, and he had to encounter the reproaches of disappointed actors, who had lost considerably by the expenses incurred in the representation, and the gibes of angry musicians and hostile poets. Scott, quoting Langbaine, mentions that one suggested, with some humour, that probably the laureate and Grabut had mistaken their trade; the former writing the music, and the latter the verse. The opera was first acted on June 3, 1685, and shortly afterwards published. Grabut published the music, with a dedication to James II, in 1687.

The period at which we have arrived is the most marked in the poet's life; for it was shortly after James's accession that Dryden became a convert to the Roman Catholic faith. It might be expected that, in an age when political and reli-

gious feelings were deeply imbued with intense party spirit, such a step on the poet's part would be instantly assailed by his opponents, and the most unworthy motives attributed to him. It is true that he laid himself open to suspicion by avowing his convictions at a juncture when they would be peculiarly grateful to the new king; for James's sentiments had long been known to all. But the question of Dryden's change of religion has been ably discussed, and the conclusion that impartial examination has arrived at is that, however mistaken he may have been in his views, he was at least sincere and stedfast in his resolution. Much misconception has arisen from the fact of the renewal of his pension by James, which has been treated by many as a reward and new grant for his sudden resolve to embrace the doctrines of the Roman Catholic communion. It has been shown, however, that this grant was antedated to include all the time that had elapsed while his pension had been in abeyance. It would be impossible to fathom the motives that induce a man to take the course which Dryden adopted. The fact that the author of the "Religio Laici" should so soon write the "Hind and the Panther," may have astonished a past generation, but our own times have exhibited equally unintelligible phases of change. We have seen those who on the one day have written most incontrovertible arguments against the Church of Rome, on the next found in the ranks of her most enthusiastic supporters. It should be remembered, too, that Dryden had been nurtured in Puritan principles, and though he

never seems to have had much sympathy with the opinions of his family, it is probable that he had not any true acquaintance with the real principles of the Church of England. This fact is not without its significance, when we find the majority of the secessions of the present day consisting of those who, at one period of their lives, held similar extreme views. The illiberality, not to say vulgarity, of Macaulay, in applying to him the term of "illustrious renegade," and saying that "he knew little or cared little about religion," is sufficiently confuted by the sincerity and stedfastness with which he adhered to his new views. He educated his sons strictly in the Romish religion, and sent them to Rome to confirm them in it; and in two of his letters, which are still in existence, he expresses the satisfaction he had, years after, in his faith. The Lady Elizabeth Dryden had been for some time a Roman Catholic, and though, as Scott observes, she may be acquitted of any share in influencing his determination, yet her new faith necessarily brought into his family persons both able and disposed to do so. His eldest and best beloved son, Charles, is also said to have been a Romanist before his father, and to have contributed to his change. The step once taken, like all new converts, he was zealous for the propagation of his recently-adopted opinions. By an entry in the Stationers' Books, made by Tonson in April, 1686, it appears that he had completed a translation of Varillas' History of Heresies, at the express command of the king. This was never published, and Burnet takes the

credit of having stifled its appearance by his remarks on the character of Varillas as a historian. One of the first acts of James, on his accession, was the publication of two papers, said to have been found in the strong box of the late king, and in Charles's own handwriting, assigning various reasons to prove that the Church of Rome was the only true Church; together with another by Anne Hyde, James's first Duchess, stating the grounds of her conversion to the Roman Catholic faith. These were industriously circulated through the kingdom. The learned Stillingfleet stood forward as the champion of the Church of England, in refutation of the arguments of the alleged royal proselytes. In answer to Stillingfleet, appeared "A Defence of the Papers written by the late king, of blessed memory, and Duchess of York, against the Answer made to them. *By command.* Lond. 1686." This was in three parts, and Dryden informs us that he was concerned in the *last.* Its tone was irritating and injudicious, and its arguments contemptuous and insulting. Stillingfleet, in his rejoinder, severely chastised the laureate, and did not spare personal invective, for which, indeed, Dryden's own bitterness had given him an opening. Dryden did not again immediately reply, but reserved himself for his forthcoming poem of the "Hind and Panther." He was occupied at the same time in translating Bouhours's "Life of St. Francis Xavier," which he dedicated to the Queen. Her majesty had addressed her vows to this saint, according to Dryden, in hopes to secure a Roman Catholic successor to the throne, and the

allusion to this fatal insinuation, in the dedication, that the birth of the young prince was owing to the supernatural intercession of St. Francis Xavier, was much insisted on by the Protestants as an argument against the reality of his birth. The work itself is interesting, and, besides the curious details of the life of Xavier himself, there is much interesting information as to the state of India and Japan at the time of his mission. Occupied as he was by his political and polemical discussions, it could not be expected that Dryden could find time for his general poetical studies. In 1685, however, Tonson had published a second volume of miscellanies, entitled "Sylvæ," to which he contributed a critical preface, with various translations from Virgil, Lucretius, and Theocritus, and four Odes of Horace, of which the third of the first book is applied to Lord Roscommon, and the twenty-ninth to Hyde, Earl of Rochester. There are also two poems by Evelyn. But we must return to the celebrated poem of the "Hind and the Panther." This long and laboured production of near two thousand lines had employed Dryden's attention during the year 1686, and the early part of 1687. It was licensed on the 11th April, 1687, and published a few days after. James's memorable "Declaration of Indulgence" had been promulgated on the 4th of April. Dryden declares in his preface that he had written the poem as a voluntary task, and not by any one's suggestion. In this assertion, Scott observes, he may be believed, for although it was the most earnest desire of James to employ every possible mode for the

conversion of his subjects, there is room to believe that, if the poem had been written under his direction, the tone adopted by Dryden towards the sectaries would have been much more mild. It is a well-known point of history, that in order to procure as many friends as possible to the repeal of the Test Act and penal laws against the Roman Catholics, James extended indulgence to the puritans and sectarian nonconformists, the ancient enemies of his person, his family, and monarchical establishments in general. Dryden obviously was not in this court secret; the purpose of which was to unite those congregations whom he has described under the parable of bloody bears, boars, wolves, foxes, &c., in a common interest with the Hind against the exclusive privileges of the Panther and her subjects. His work was written with the precisely opposite intention of recommending a union between the Roman Catholics and the Church of England. To attain this object, his purpose was to detail, in poetry, the arguments which had led him into the profession of the Romish faith. If, adds Scott, it was undertaken without the knowledge of the Court, it was calculated, on its appearance, to secure the royal countenance and support. Accordingly, as soon as it was published in England, a second edition was thrown off at a printing-house in Holyrood House, Edinburgh, then maintained for the express purpose of disseminating such treatises as were best calculated to serve the Roman Catholic cause. Much exception has been taken to the fable-form of the poem, but candour compels us

to admit that, however clumsy the contrivance, it contains some of the most beautiful lines in the poet's writings. Though we may differ as to the conclusions, the Romish arguments are set forth with great skill, and, if they were not furnished for him, they show Dryden to have acquired a complete mastery over the details of his new faith. Scott has ably criticised the whole poem in his eleventh volume, and to that criticism we may refer the reader who would wish to examine in full the history of a poem which, to our minds, may be justly reckoned amongst the finest specimens of English heroic verse, and which perpetually glows with rich imagery clothed in magnificent language. It was not likely that the "Hind and the Panther" would escape ridicule, and, accordingly, the author became a more general object of attack than he had been even on the publication of "Absalom and Achitophel."

On that occasion the offence was given only to a party, now his enemies were far more numerous, including most of his former friends, the Tories of the High Church. Amongst the earliest and most prominent assailants were Charles Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, and Matthew Prior, then a student at St. John's College, Cambridge. Their joint production was entitled, "The Hind and Panther transversed, or the City and Country Mouse," and it seems to have been published before 24th October, 1687. Montague is supposed to have written the preface, and Prior to have contributed the greater portion of the work. The parody is founded on the twice-told jest of the

"Rehearsal," and its temporary popularity must be attributed rather to its falling in with the tide of public feeling than to any inherent vigour, or even wit. It is said that Dryden was much affected by the unkindness of this satire from two young men to whom he had always been civil. Montague and Prior had probably been frequenters of Will's Coffee-house, where Dryden reigned supreme, and where he had, perhaps, distinguished them amongst the rising young wits; but, notwithstanding Dean Lockier's testimony, we can hardly suppose that he shed tears at the provocation of their satire. He surely had been too much inured to personal attacks. It is possible, as Mr. Mitford observes, that the story has not lost as it has come down to us. Another parodier published "The Revolter, a tragi-comedy, acted between the Hind and Panther and Religio Laici," in which he brings the doctrines of the "Religio Laici" and of the "Hind and Panther" in battle array against each other, and rails at the author of both with the most unbounded scurrility. Four letters by Matthew Clifford, of the Charter-House, (who had been long dead,) containing virulent notes and criticisms on Dryden's plays, were now printed, with a supplementary letter from Tom Brown, entitled "Reflections on the Hind and Panther," full of low buffoonery. Brown followed up his attack by subsequently (1688-9) publishing "The New Converts exposed; or Reasons for Mr. Bayes changing his Religion." Another grossly insolent and personal pamphlet was "Religio Laici," or a Layman's Faith touching the Supreme and Infallible

Guide of the Church, by J. R., a Convert of Mr. Bayes. In Two Letters to a Friend in the Country. Licensed June the 1st. 1688." In fact, Dryden was assailed by a shower of libels from wretched poet-asters and scurrilous satirists, who clamoured against Mr. Bayes and his change of religion. "The cry against our author," adds Scott, "being thus general, we may reasonably suppose that he would have taken some opportunity to exercise his powers of retort upon those who were most active or most considerable among the aggressors, and that Montague and Prior stood a fair chance of being coupled up with Doeg and Og, his former antagonists." But if Dryden entertained any intention of retaliation, the Revolution, which crushed his rising prospects, took away both the opportunity and inclination. From that period the fame of the "Hind and Panther" gradually diminished, as the controversy between Protestant and Papist gave way to that between Whig and Tory. The poem is said to have been written at Rushton, near Huntingdon, where was an embowered walk, which, from the pleasure the poet took in it, retained the name of 'Dryden's Walk,' and here was placed, about the middle of last century, an urn with the inscription, "In memory of Dryden, who frequented these shades, and is here said to have composed his poem of 'The Hind and Panther.'" The first "Song for St. Cecilia's Day" was written in this year (1687) and, having been set to music by Draghi, an Italian composer, was performed on the 22nd of November, the festival of the saint. Scott truly observes that it has been so completely

eclipsed by the lustre of "Alexander's Feast," that few readers give themselves the trouble of reading it. Yet the first stanza has exquisite merit, and it is perhaps only our intimate acquaintance with the second ode that leads us to undervalue the first. But Dryden's pen was now zealously employed in the promulgation of his new faith; nor did it confine its efforts to poetry. Probably by direction, he translated the "Life of St. Francis Xavier," with a dedication to the queen, who had adopted St. Francis as her tutelary saint. In this dedication occurs the first hint of the possibility of her majesty giving birth to a son through the intercession of St. Francis Xavier; and the same miraculous interposition of the saint is specially alluded to in the poem of "Britannia Rediviva," published in June, 1688, within a fortnight after the birth of the prince. The confident expectations of the Roman Catholics that the child would prove a son, and the insinuations of the miracle, reacted upon the Protestant party, and founded in their estimation an argument against the reality of the child's birth. However, "on the 10th of June, 1688," says Scott, "the prince was born, under circumstances which ought to have removed all suspicion of imposture. But these suspicions were too deeply rooted in party prejudices and fears; and it became a distinguishing mark of a true Protestant to hold for spurious the birth of a prince, which took place in the presence of more people than is either consistent with custom or decency." Dryden, with characteristic enthusiasm, hastened to

hail the apparently auspicious event with a new poem, "Britannia Rediviva," in which, observes Johnson, "nothing is very remarkable but the exorbitant adulation, and that insensibility of the precipice on which the king was then standing, which the laureate apparently shared with the rest of the courtiers." He might have added that it exhibits a profanity which, as Mr. Bell truly says, shows the indecent lengths into which the Roman Catholics suffered themselves to be betrayed in the ecstatic fanaticism of the hour.

Short-lived, however, were the hopes of Dryden and the Romanist party. In Johnson's caustic language, "A few months cured him of controversy, dismissed him from Court, and made him again a play-wright and translator." The very event which he had looked to as the crown of his fortunes hastened their fall. The birth of the prince precipitated the long-impending revolution. His religion rendered it impossible for him to retain his Court-offices under the new government, and thus in August, 1689, he was deprived of the post of laureate and historiographer, while he had the additional mortification of seeing his old and despised opponent Shadwell installed as his successor. It is said, upon the authority of Prior, that Dorset, the Lord Chamberlain, feeling compunction at being compelled to dismiss his friend, made him a compensation by an allowance, equivalent to his salary, from his private purse. But though Dryden, in his preface to the translation of Juvenal, alludes to Dorset's generosity, there does not seem any truth in Prior's story. On the

contrary, Dryden, finding his resources so reduced by the loss of his official income, and the expenses of providing for and educating his family increasing, was compelled to have recourse once more to the stage, which he had relinquished during the reign of James, with the exception of the representation of "Albion and Albanius." It is remarkable that the very first play which Queen Mary attended was our author's "Spanish Friar," and we have incidentally mentioned the confusion into which it threw her. Nor could the representation have been more gratifying to the author, when he reflected that his newly-adopted religion was so severely satirized in the character of Father Dominic.

The first new dramatic effort of his pen was the tragedy of "Don Sebastian." It was elaborated with much care, "not huddled up in haste," as he is anxious to tell us. It is justly esteemed as the *chef-d'œuvre* of his plays. Scott is warm in its praise; "Shakspeare laid aside," he says, "it will be, perhaps, difficult to point out a play containing more animatory incident, impassioned language, and beautiful description, than 'Don Sebastian.' The scene betwixt Dorax and the King, had it been the only one ever Dryden wrote, would have been sufficient to insure his immortality. I will not dwell on the beauties of this scene. If any one is incapable of relishing it, he may safely conclude that nature has not merely denied him that rare gift—poetical taste—but common powers of comprehending the ordinary feelings of humanity." But notwithstanding this

panegyric on a really masterly conception, it must not be overlooked that the play contains most serious blemishes. The plot is highly objectionable, and there are expressions which we must consider with abhorrence. The language of Almeyda is too voluptuous to be approved, and the comic scenes are too broad. The violations of the manners of the Mahometans are ridiculous; and Addison has remarked on the absurdity of putting classical allusions in their mouth, in the *Guardian*, No. 110. "Collier complains," says Scott, "and with very good reason, that in the character of the mufti, Dryden has seized an opportunity to deride and calumniate the priesthood of every religion, an opportunity which, I am sorry to say, he seldom fails to use with unjustifiable inveteracy." "Don Sebastian" was brought out with great theatrical pomp in 1690. It was, nevertheless, received with coldness, and it was not till it had undergone several retrenchments and alterations that it rose to favour. On its publication in the same year, it was dedicated to Philip Sidney, third Earl of Leicester, brother to Algernon Sidney, a nobleman who, though of Whig principles, had the good taste and courage to look with favour on the degraded laureate. In the preface, Dryden tells us that perhaps "from long disuse of writing" he had made the action too long, and that the play had occupied four hours in the representation. Above twelve hundred lines, however, were "judiciously lopped by Mr. Betterton," which the author restored to their place when the play was printed. He mentions also having introduced

"some newnesses of English, translated from the beauties of modern tongues, as well as from the elegancies of the Latin; and here and there some old words are sprinkled, which, for their significance and sound, deserved not to be antiquated; such as we often find in Sallust amongst the Roman authors, and in Milton's 'Paradise' amongst ours; though, perhaps, the latter, instead of sprinkling, has dealt them with too free a hand, even sometimes to the obscuring of his sense."

In the same year he produced "Amphitryon," a comedy adapted from Plautus and Molière, which has been styled "one of the happiest effusions of Dryden's comic muse." Dryden, however, is inferior to both his predecessors in the subject, as he has written it down, as it were, to the taste of the seventeenth century, and interlarded it with gratuitous indelicacy. It was well received, and long continued to be acted. Mr. Mitford, who was present at its revival some years since, says that, as taste has grown more capricious, or more refined in modern days, not even the skill and cleverness of the best comic actors could save it from disgrace; the play was heard throughout with impatience and dislike. Malone found amongst Tonson's papers a letter and copy of verses in praise of "Amphitryon," from Milbourne, who afterwards attacked Dryden's "Virgil" with such asperity. The play was printed and dedicated, Oct. 24, 1690, to Sir William Leveson Gower, another great Whig partisan. Scott thinks this choice of a patron arose from Sir William's connexion with the family of Hyde, Earl of Rochester,

the poet's constant friend, but Dryden seems to have known him for many years, as he says in the dedication, "the warm remembrance of your noble hospitality to me at Trentham, when some years ago I visited my friends and relations in your country, has ever since given me a violent temptation to this boldness."

In 1691, was performed the opera of "King Arthur, or the British Worthy." It was originally written for the conclusion of the reign of Charles II., and the political masque of "Albion and Albanius" was frequently rehearsed before him as the prologue to "King Arthur." The poet had long meditated an epic on the subject of "King Arthur," but he laid it aside, not meeting with sufficient encouragement from his royal patrons. The only result of his thoughts was the present opera. It had, doubtless, originally, a political tendency, but for fear of giving offence to the Government, "I have been obliged," he says, "so much to alter the first design, and take away so many beauties from the writing, that it is now no more what it was formerly, than the present ship of the *Royal Sovereign*, after so often taking down and altering, is the vessel it was at the first building." We learn also that he felt the difficulty of suiting his poetry to the exigencies of music. Through the influence of his "first and best patroness, the Duchess of Monmouth," the manuscript was perused by Queen Mary, who was pleased to give it her royal approbation. It was acted with great applause, but perhaps no slight part of its success was owing to the music (to use Dryden's own

expression) "passing through the artful hands of Mr. Purcell." The dances were composed by Priest, and did not disgrace the music and poetry. "I shall observe," says Mr. Mitford, "if any one, conversant with the poetry of Milton, will attentively read this play and 'Don Sebastian,' he will acknowledge that Dryden had now diligently studied the works of that great poet, and transplanted, with taste and judicious selection, some of his fine combinations of language, and beautiful expressions of thought. The lyrical dialogue between Cupid and the Genius, was in the recollection of Gray, when he wrote the 'Descent of Odin.'" The opera was printed in 1691, with a dedication to the Marquis of Halifax, as the friend of Charles, and to whose cautious policy he ascribes the nation's escape from a civil war, which seemed impending in the last years of that monarch's reign.

"Cleomenes, or the Spartan Hero," a tragedy, was the poet's next effort. On the eve of representation it was prohibited. "This," observes Scott, "was not very surprising, considering the subject of the play, and Dryden's well-known principles. The history of an exiled monarch soliciting, in the court of an ally, aid to relieve his country from a foreign yoke, and to restore him to the throne of his fathers, with the account of a popular insurrection undertaken for the same purpose, were delicate themes during the reign of William III.; at least, when the pen of Dryden was to be employed in them, whose well-known skill at adapting an ancient story to a modern moral had so often been exercised in the cause of

the house of Stuart." It would seem, however, that the influence of Hyde, Earl of Rochester, uncle to the Queen, procured a reversal of this award against a play which was really inoffensive. But notwithstanding the curiosity and excitement which must have arisen from the Chamberlain's prohibition, the play met with an indifferent reception, which must be ascribed to the insipidity of the plot. By reason of Dryden's illness, it would seem that half of the last act was entrusted to Southerne for composition. Dryden printed it with a dedication to Lord Rochester. In the preface he mentions that he had sketched out the subject seven or eight years previously, and had spoken about it to Lord Falkland at the time; that he had forgotten this latter circumstance till his lordship did him the good office of representing at court that he knew it had been long ago designed. To the printed copy was also prefixed a "Life of Cleomenes," translated from Plutarch by Creech, "to whom the world," says Dryden, "has been indebted for his excellent version of Lucretius, and I particularly obliged in his translation of Horace." It may here be passingly remarked, that Dryden's scurrilous libellers constantly asserted that, envious of the reputation acquired by Creech in his translation of Lucretius, he urged him to attempt a version of Horace, a task for which he was totally unfit; and that he afterwards expressed such a contempt for the version as to drive poor Creech to melancholy and suicide. It might appear hardly necessary to refute such a calumny, ridiculous as it seems, but

it was very industriously circulated. The above testimony, however, of Dryden, and the fact that Creech dedicated the second edition of his translation of Horace to Dryden, are surely sufficient proofs of the falsehood of the scandal. "Cleomenes" was acted and published in 1692, and Dryden specially mentions the acting of Mrs. Barry. We should, perhaps, notice that in a pecuniary point, Dryden's return to the drama was attended with little success, for he tells us in the preface to this play, "The subsistence which I had from the former Government is lost; and the reward I have from the stage is so little, that it is not worth my labour." His last play, "Love Triumphant; or Nature will Prevail,"* a tragi-comedy, was acted in 1693. In a curious letter, preserved by Malone, dated March 1693-4, the writer tells us, "it was damned by the universal cry of the town, *nemine contradicente* but the conceited poet. He says in his prologue that this is the last the town must expect from him; he had done himself a kindness, had he taken his leave before." Though written in an ill-natured spirit, there can be no doubt of the truth of this criticism. It is confessedly, with, perhaps, the exception of "Amboyna," the worst of his dramas. Mr. Mitford thinks it not improbable that, in the hard necessities of his later days, he might have produced "a piece written in earlier life, and which had been deservedly neglected by him while

* Mr. Bell has printed some very interesting letters from Dryden to Walsh, in one of which Dryden mentions that he thought of calling his play "Love Triumphant; or Neither Side to Blame."

the full vigour and luxuriance of his genius supplied him without difficulty." "The plot," he adds, "turns on the indulgence of that incestuous passion on which the genius of Dryden seemed to look without a sufficient consideration of its offensive nature." In the dedication to James, fourth Earl of Salisbury, a kinsman of Lady Elizabeth, the poet commends to his care this last production of his dramatic muse with no hint of its want of success on the stage, but rather with a commendation of its proprieties, which might set the critics at defiance. Thus, having held possession of the stage for thirty years, from 1664-94, during which time his fertility of invention had bestowed on it no less than twenty-seven plays, he closed his career as he had commenced it, with ill-success—"a fact," adds Scott, "which may secure the inexperienced author from despondence, and teach him who has gained reputation, how little he ought to presume on its stability."

The composition of the four plays with which he closed his dramatic career after the Revolution had probably left him little leisure for other literary employment. He had mentioned in his preface to Cleomenes that Polybius, a favourite author with him, had been translated, and upon the appearance of the version, which was by his friend Sir Henry Shere, in 1692, he prefixed a character of the author and his writings. In the same year he published, in a folio volume, a translation of Juvenal and Persius. In this work he was assisted by his two sons, Congreve, Creech, Tate, and others. The translations of the first,

third, sixth, tenth, and fifteenth satires of Juvenal are by his hand. The volume was prefaced by his celebrated Essay on Satire, addressed to Charles Earl of Dorset, the Lord Chamberlain, to whom he was indebted for much personal kindness on losing his office of laureate, though, probably, not to the extent of Prior's story. This essay is one of the most interesting and valuable of his prose works. "The general character," says Johnson, "of this translation will be given, when it is said to preserve the wit, but to want the dignity, of the original." He might have added that Dryden seems to have delighted in exceeding the grossness of his author in those satires which fell to his share. The thirteenth, which was the work of Creech, meets with Johnson's approbation on the score of grandeur. The version of Persius appears to him "to have been written merely for wages, in an uniform mediocrity, without any eager endeavour after excellence, or laborious effort of the mind." "By nature," says Gifford, "Dryden was eminently gifted as a translator of Persius. He had much of his austerity of manner and closeness of reasoning; yet, by some unaccountable obliquity, he missed those characteristic qualities so habitual to him, and made the poet flippant and inconsequential." Yet, though now little read, Dryden's translations of Juvenal and Persius contain passages which "will never be excelled."

Dryden's "critical empire over literature," as Scott styles it, if it had been temporarily in abeyance by the mischances of his political party, was now completely restored; and he had resumed that

sort of authority in Will's Coffee-house, to which we had occasion to allude before the Revolution. "His supremacy, indeed, seems to have been so effectually established that a 'pinch out of Dryden's snuff-box' was equal to taking a degree in that academy of wit." The asperities engendered by his change of religion had been softened down; and this, with the growing dislike of all parties to the new Government, brought about a reconciliation between him and some of his kinsmen, particularly with his cousin, John Driden, of Chesterton, with whom, from about this period till his death, he lived on terms of uninterrupted friendship. It was, doubtless, the universal fame to which he had now been restored which induced the Earl of Abingdon to engage him to compose a tribute to the memory of his wife, who had died suddenly in a ball-room in her own house, just prepared for an entertainment, on May 31st, 1691. He does not seem to have complied with the request for many months, and mentions as excuse "ill health, some business, and many troubles." The poem, "Eleonora," was published in 1692. Notwithstanding the poet's protest, in the dedication, that he "swam with the tide," and was borne along by the subject, it is evident that the work was essentially a set task. It would seem that he neither knew the lord nor the lady, and though the leading features of the lady's character were doubtless pointed out to him, "the poem," as Scott says, "resembles rather an abstract panegyric on an imaginary being than an elegy on a real character." The earl is said to have rewarded

the poet with a gift of 500 guineas. In July, 1693, appeared a third volume of "Tonson's Miscellany." To this Dryden contributed the first, and part of the ninth and sixteenth books of Ovid's Metamorphoses, the Parting of Hector and Andromache, from the Iliad, and a few songs. He prefixed the dedication to Lord Radclyffe, eldest son of the Earl of Derwentwater. From an interesting letter of the poet to Tonson, written from Northamptonshire in August, 1693, it would seem that the bookseller was disappointed in his expectations from Lord Radclyffe's patronage, and from the same letter it appears that the Queen had taken offence at some expressions in the dedication, and had commanded Rymer to attack Dryden's plays; but, though the poet "doubted not his malice" from a former hint of Tonson's, it does not seem that the breach ever became wider. With reference to this Miscellany, there is extant an amusing letter from Tonson to Dryden, in which the bookseller makes a most mercantile expostulation with the poet for having offered six hundred lines to another publisher for twenty guineas, and yet giving him only 1446 lines for fifty guineas! In 1693, Congreve's "Double Dealer" was acted, but with little success. Upon this occasion Dryden addressed him, in the Epistle, "to my dear friend, Mr. Congreve," which contains the affecting lines committing the charge of his posthumous fame to him. Congreve, though only twenty-six years of age, had won the esteem of Dryden. In the letter to Tonson, above quoted, Dryden says, "I am Mr. Congreve's true lover,

and desire you to tell him how kindly I take his often remembrances of me. I wish him all prosperity, and hope I shall never lose his affection;" and in the dedication to the third Miscellany he speaks in the highest terms of Congreve's literary powers. His affection was not misplaced, as Congreve has left us the well-known beautiful tribute to the memory of his deceased friend, in the preface to the collected edition of Dryden's dramatic works. Tonson published a fourth volume of Miscellanies in 1694, to which Dryden only contributed a version of the Third Georgic, and an epistle to Sir Godfrey Kneller in return for a copy of the Chandos portrait of Shakespeare. It may be interesting to know that Kneller's picture is now at Wentworth, the seat of Earl FitzWilliam. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that the original is now, through the munificence of the late Earl of Ellesmere, in the National Portrait Gallery; when Kneller copied it, it was in the possession of Betterton, the actor. Dryden now had resolved to concentrate his energies on the great task of translating Virgil. In a letter to Walsh, dated December 12th, 1693 (printed by Mr. Bell from the original in the possession of Sir Thomas Phillips) he says:—"I have undertaken to translate all Virgil; and as an essay, have already paraphrased the Third Georgic as an example; it will be published in Tonson's next Miscellanies, in Hilary Term. I propose to do it by subscription; having an hundred and two brass cuts with the coat of arms of the subscriber to each cut; every subscriber to pay five guineas, half in hand; besides

another inferior subscription of two guineas for the rest, whose names are only written in a catalogue printed with the book." In speaking of the difficulties of a translation of Virgil, Johnson says:— "All these obstacles Dryden saw, and all these he determined to encounter. The expectation of his work was undoubtedly great: the nation considered its honour as interested in the event. One gave him the different editions of his author, another helped him in the subordinate parts. The arguments of the several books were given him by Addison." To Malone's industry, or what Scott styles "pious enthusiasm" we are indebted for the following particulars: "Mr. Gilbert Dolben gave him the various editions of his author; Dr. Knightley Chetwode furnished him with the life of Virgil, and the preface to the Pastorals; and Addison supplied the arguments of the several books, and an essay on the Georgics. The first lines of this great poet which he translated, he wrote with a diamond on a pane of glass in one of the windows of Chesterton House, in Huntingdonshire, the residence of his kinsman and namesake, John Driden, Esq.* The version of the first Georgic, and a great part of the last Æneid, was made at Denham Court in Buckinghamshire, the seat of Sir William Bowyer, Bart., and the seventh Æneid was translated at Burghley, the noble mansion of the Earl of Exeter." It appears that there were one hundred and one subscribers of the first set, or those who paid five

* Chesterton House was pulled down, for the sake of the materials, in 1807.

guineas, and two hundred and fifty at two guineas each. Besides these, Dryden received from Tonson* fifty pounds for each book of the Georgics and Æneid, and probably the same for the Pastorals collectively. Scott has calculated that, deducting the expense of the engravings (though these were only the plates used for Ogilby's Virgil, retouched) and Tonson's charges for the copies delivered to the subscribers, the poet received about £1200 or £1300, "a trifling sum when compared with what Pope received for the Iliad, which was certainly between £5000 and £6000, yet great in proportion to what the age of Dryden had ever afforded as an encouragement to literature." The real work at the translation commenced, probably, in the spring of 1694, and some of the correspondence between the author and publisher, during its progress, is still extant. In one of these letters Dryden observed that it would require seven years to translate Virgil exactly, yet the work was accomplished in less than half that time. The Eclogues had been printed in the first Miscellany; and in their re-translation, the poet availed himself of the labours of some of his co-adjutors, though not to any great extent. The Third Georgic, as we have seen, had been already prepared. The earlier books of the Æneid seem to have been translated with rapidity, probably under pecuniary pressure, as three days

* So says Scott; but I think it appears clear from Dryden's correspondence with Tonson, that he received £50 upon the completion of every two books, which would reduce the copy-money to £25 a book. See Scott's Dryden, vol. xviii. Letters xii., xv., xix.

after the completion of the fourth book, we find him writing to Tonson, "the paying Ned Sheldon the £50 put me upon this speed; but I intend not so much to overtoil myself after the sixth book is ended. If the second subscriptions rise, I will take so much the more time, because the profit will encourage me the more; if not, I must make the more haste; yet always with as much care as I am able. But, however, I will not fail in my pains of translating the sixth Æneid with the same exactness as I have performed the fourth, because that book is my greatest favourite."

At this period of the work, a quarrel arose between the poet and the publisher, which temporarily interrupted a more than ordinarily friendly intimacy. The poet, perhaps, with the true instinct of the *genus irritabile*, placed more than a mercantile value upon his productions, and felt annoyed at the cautious and calculating steps of the somewhat penurious tradesman, and thus he writes:—"Some kind of intercourse must be carried on betwixt us, while I am translating Virgil. Therefore I give you notice that I have done the seventh Æneid in the country,* and intend, some few days hence, to go upon the eighth. When that is finished, I expect £50 in good silver, not such as I have had formerly. I am not obliged to take gold, neither will I; nor stay for it beyond four-and-twenty hours after it is due. . . I thank you for the civility of your last letter in the country; but the thirty shillings upon every book remains with me. You always

* At Burghley House, near Stamford, the seat of the Earl of Exeter.

intended I should get nothing by the second subscriptions, as I found from first to last. And your promise to Mr. Congreve, that you had found a way for my benefit, which was an encouragement to my pains, came at last, for me to desire Sir Godfrey Kneller, and Mr. Closterman, to gather for me. I then told Mr. Congreve that I knew you too well to believe you meant me any kindness; and he promised me to believe accordingly of you if you did not. But this is past; and you shall have your bargain, if I live and have my health. . . . . I desire neither excuses nor reasons from you, for I am but too well satisfied already. The notes and prefaces shall be short, because you shall get the more by saving paper." It may be necessary to explain one or two passages in this letter. Congreve appears (from a former letter) to have been present as a common friend in an interview between Dryden and Tonson, on the terms of the work. Tonson seems to have made some deductions in the collection of the second, or two guinea, subscriptions, hence Dryden asked Kneller and Closterman, the portrait-painters of the day, whose intercourse with the higher and wealthier classes of society would give them the opportunity, to collect for him. The ironical sneer, "for the saving of paper," was at Tonson's refusal to make any additional payment for annotations. In a subsequent letter, however, he says—"I am not sorry that you will not allow anything towards the notes, for to make them good would have cost me half a year's time at least." The public, also, may not be sorry at old Jacob's obduracy, as, judging from the specimen of

the notes to Juvenal and Persius, we have sustained no loss in the omission of those on Virgil. It has been thought that Dryden was much annoyed at this time by a wish on Tonson's part that the great work should be dedicated to King William. This was peremptorily (and much to his honour) refused by the poet. The publisher, however, had evidently hoped that the difficulty might be surmounted, as "he had an especial care to make the engraver aggravate the nose of Æneas in the plates into a sufficient resemblance of the hooked promontory of the deliverer's countenance."* It would be well if he took no more unjustifiable means to further his views; but Dryden, in a letter to his sons at Rome, says—"I am of your opinion that, by Tonson's means, almost all our letters have miscarried for this last year. But, however, he has missed of his design in the dedication, though he had prepared the book for it; for in every figure of Æneas, he has caused him to be drawn like King William, with a hooked nose." It is pleasing to find this proof of Dryden's integrity of purpose, political and religious. There are two or three stories current, which, if not apocryphal, may be ascribed to this period. Upon one occa-

* Scott. This gave rise to the well-known epigram:—

"Old Jacob, by deep judgment sway'd,
To please the wise beholders,
Has placed old Nassau's hook-nosed head
On young Æneas' shoulders.

"To make the parallel hold tack,
Methinks there's little lacking;
One took his father pick-a-pack,
And t'other sent his packing."

sion, we are told, Dryden, incensed at some refusal of accommodation on Tonson's part, sent him three oft-quoted coarse lines, descriptive of his personal appearance :—

> "With leering looks, bull-faced, and freckled fair,
> With two left legs, and Judas-coloured hair,
> And frowsy pores, that taint the ambient air."

"Tell the dog," said the poet to the messenger, "that he who wrote these can write more." But Tonson was perfectly satisfied with the triplet. Dr. Johnson gives another anecdote: "Lord Bolingbroke, who in his youth had cultivated poetry, related to Dr. King, of Oxford, that one day when he visited Dryden, they heard, as they were conversing, another person entering the house. 'This,' said Dryden, 'is Tonson. You will take care not to depart before he goes away, for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him; and if you leave me unprotected, I must suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can prompt his tongue.'" There is certainly an air of improbability about this story, for we do not discover from the only source of real information, their correspondence, any appearance of rudeness in Tonson, nor, what is more to the purpose, any disposition to timidity on Dryden's part. Whatever may have been the cause of their quarrel, it does not appear to have lasted long, for in a letter mentioning that he had but four more books to finish, the poet contents himself with a growl: "Upon trial I find all of your trade are sharpers, and you not more than others, therefore I have not wholly left you. . . . . Get the first half of Virgil transcribed as

soon as you possibly can, that I may put the notes to it; and you may have the other four books which lye ready for you when you bring the former; that the press may stay as little as it possibly can. . . . . Having no silver by me, I desire my Lord Derby's money, deducting your own. And let it be good, if you desire to oblige me, who am not your enemy, and may be your friend, John Dryden."

During the progress of his Virgil, Dryden found time " to borrow two months," as he says, to make a prose translation of Du Fresnoy's " Art of Painting." This work, he tells us, was recommended to him by " many of our most skilful painters, and other artists," who assisted him in those portions which referred to the terms of art. Malone has, with great probability, conjectured that these friends were Sir Godfrey Kneller and Closterman, who had been active in procuring subscriptions for his Virgil. The version was printed in 1695, and Dryden prefixed a " Parallel of Poetry and Painting," the work (as he tells us in the conclusion) of twelve mornings. It was republished in 1716 by Richard Graham, corrected, in those passages where Dryden had erred, by Jervas the painter, and containing Pope's beautiful epistle to Jervas. A " Life of Lucian," for a translation of his works by Sir Henry Shere, Walter Moyle, Charles Blount, and others, is also ascribed to this period of Dryden's literary life, but it was probably written a year or two earlier, as he speaks of Blount as living, who, according to Scott, committed suicide in August 1693. This version was not published till 1711, and, though he executed no part of the translation,

still retains the title of "Dryden's Lucian." At length, in July, 1697, the Virgil was published. It had been eagerly expected, and so rapid was the sale, that a second impression was called for early in the next year. "It satisfied," says Johnson, "his friends, and, for the most part, silenced his enemies." There were not wanting, however, some cavillers. Amongst these the most conspicuous were Swift, and Luke Milbourne, a clergyman of Yarmouth. Swift, who was a distant connection of the poet, had been nettled at a criticism of Dryden's on some early efforts of his muse, in which he is said to have remarked, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet." Milbourne's self-sufficiency has pilloried him for all ages. Swift levelled a bitter sarcasm at the poet for the triple dedication of the Pastorals, Georgics, and Æneid, to three several patrons, Lords Clifford, Chesterfield, and Mulgrave. This "œconomy of flattery, at once lavish and discreet," as Johnson styles it, has been much animadverted on, but it was a not infrequent custom of the age, and, after all, is not a very great sin against good taste. On this magnificent effort of genius, Pope's verdict on which, "the most noble and spirited translation that I know in any language," stands still unreversed, it would appear presumptuous to pass a criticism. It may be faulty in many respects, it may be licentious in parts, it may not thoroughly represent the original. It should be remembered (though this ought not to be excused) that it was written under pressure, and that the author had not the finished and exact scholarship of the

present day, but though many a more accomplished Latinist has attempted the task, it may, without undue partiality, be asserted that the grandeur of "Dryden's Virgil" (as his satirist Swift sneeringly calls it) has never yet been approached. "That book is good in vain," says Johnson, "which the reader throws away. He only is the master, who keeps the mind in pleasing captivity; whose pages are perused with eagerness, and in hope of new pleasure are perused again; and whose conclusion is perceived with an eye of sorrow, such as the traveller casts upon departing day. By his proportion of this predomination I will consent that Dryden should be tried: of this, which, in opposition to reason, makes Ariosto the darling and the pride of Italy; of this, which, in defiance of criticism, continues Shakespeare the sovereign of the drama." Some readers may, however, wish to have a critical opinion on this great work, and to such the following remarks of an elegant and accomplished scholar, the late Rev. John Mitford, may not be uninteresting:—

"Dr. Johnson has spoken of the merits of this translation, though he has not entered into a critical exposition of its beauties; but as it seems to have united the suffrage of the critics, and the approbation of the public, I shall just observe that while I confess it to possess many and various excellencies, while I believe that it has enriched our language with new forms of expression, and new modulations of verse, I do not think that it adequately represents the peculiar beauties of the original poem. Dryden does not seem fully aware

of what has been well called 'the rich œconomy' of Virgil's expression, the exquisite structure and magic of his words, to attain which he has pushed the power of his language to the extreme verge of its structure, and transplanted those graces from its parent tongue which his native idiom did not supply; nor has Dryden kept in mind, that he who treads in the footsteps of the Roman poet must not deviate without error from the path that has been prescribed.* Hence the grace, the fineness of touch, the *tender bloom*, of Virgil's language is lost; and that finished and innate delicacy of taste which seemed instinctively to feel how to arrange the rich materials which it had collected, and which presents all that is appropriate and all that is select;† which admits no figure into its composition that does not produce the intended effect; this cannot with justice be said to have been successfully attained by the translator. Almost every epic poem has its own peculiar level from which it rises, its own presiding tone of diction. The style of Virgil is elegant, ornamented, and graceful, giving him scope to make gentle descents on the wing, or occasionally to soar, without unnatural

* Dryden has not attended sufficiently to the *tenses* used by Virgil; while Pope is particularly defective in rendering the force of the *particles* used by Homer: indeed, he seems almost entirely to have neglected them, to the great detriment of his translation.

† "Virgil's great distinctive excellence is delicacy of sentiment and expression, joined to the most consummate technical skill, and just feeling in dressing out every circumstance or incident that he employs; but in the *appropriation* of those incidents or circumstances he is less happy."—P. Knight *on Taste*, p. 312.

effort, into the higher regions of imaginative creation; while his language has such a transparent and crystal clearness, as to reflect with precision every image deposited within it. In awakening the finer sensibilities, in delineating the movement of the varying passions, in portraying the deep emotions of the heart, Dryden always failed, and such power here was imperiously demanded; yet we must allow that the general character of his poem is dignified, majestic, and harmonious, that it flows on 'with varied sweetness and with varied force,' that it possesses many passages of surprising vigour and energy, and examples of versification splendid and successful. Perhaps, as he himself suspected, he should have chosen an author of a different kind: perhaps, under any skill or talent, our language cannot reflect the exquisite beauties of the original. Certainly it must be said, that no one has yet eclipsed the fame which Dryden has so long enjoyed."

It may surely be numbered amongst the *memorabilia* of literature that in the same year that he published his Virgil, Dryden composed his immortal Ode for St. Cecilia's day, "Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music." In September, 1697, he writes to his sons at Rome, "I am writing a song for St. Cecilia's Feast, who, you know, is the patroness of music. This is troublesome, and no way beneficial; but I could not deny the stewards, who came in a body to my house to desire that kindness, one of them being Mr. Bridgeman, whose parents are your mother's friends." Derrick, on the authority

of Walter Moyle, says that the Society paid £40 to Dryden for this Ode. It was set to music by Jeremiah Clarke, one of the stewards, some of whose anthems are still sung in our cathedrals, and whose melancholy suicide is detailed by Malone. It seems that Clarke's composition was not deemed worthy of publication. The musical reader, however, need not be reminded that the "Ode," as set by Handel, was performed at Covent Garden on February 19, 1735-6, when the receipts amounted to no less than £450.* From the letter to his sons, above quoted, it would appear that Dryden was occupied some time in writing the Ode, and Dr. Birch tells us (upon authority which cannot now be verified) that he was almost a fortnight "composing and correcting it." On the other hand, the well-known anecdote of St. John's (afterwards Lord Bolingbroke) interview with Dryden would seem to intimate that it was the work of a single night. "Mr. St. John (afterwards Lord Bolingbroke) happening to pay a morning visit to Dryden, whom he always respected, found him in an unusual agitation of spirits, even to a trembling. On inquiring the cause, 'I have been up all night,' replied the old bard; 'my musical friends made me promise to write them an Ode for their Feast of St. Cecilia. I have been so struck with the subject which occurred to me, that I could not leave it till I had *completed* it: here it is, *finished* at one sitting.'" Scott has ingeniously endeavoured to reconcile these statements, but we think that Dryden's own

*. See Burney's History of Music, iv. 391.

letter is the better evidence of his long meditation over the subject. The Festival of St. Cecilia was celebrated on November 22, and yet we find the poet telling his sons two months previously of his commencement of the work. It is not improbable that he wrote off the conception in one night, and there is every appearance of rapidity in its inspiration; but that it was *completed* and *finished* at one sitting, as the Bolingbroke anecdote would have us believe, is not so clear. One does not like to disturb a pleasing tradition, yet we are afraid that St. John's testimony, on this, as on a former occasion, appears to bear but little evidence of truth. Johnson, who speaks of this Ode as "exhibiting the highest flight of fancy, and the exactest nicety of art," and says that "it is allowed to stand without a rival," still fancies that he can find traces of negligence and haste from "some of the lines being without corresponding rhymes;" a defect which he "never detected but after an acquaintance of many years, and which the enthusiasm of the writer might hinder him from perceiving." It is singular that Mr. Bell should assent to this, as he styles it, "curious discovery made by Dr. Johnson." If the reader would carefully examine the poem, it would be found no such defect exists, further than what is perfectly legitimate in the irregularity of a lyric written for musical adaptation. Though Clarke's music was not successful, the applause which greeted Dryden's poetry was universal. In a letter to Tonson, of the date, probably, of December, 1697, the poet writes, "I am glad to hear from all hands that my Ode is

esteemed the best of all my poetry, by all the town. I thought so myself when I writ it; but being old I mistrusted my own judgment. I hope it has done you service, and will do more." From this last sentence it would seem that the Ode was published shortly after its composition, a fact which is corroborated by a passage in another letter to Tonson apparently written about the same time, as in both are allusions to the corrections for the second impression of the Virgil. In the latter letter, he says, "Dr. Chetwode claims my promise of the Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, which I desire you to send him (according to the Parliament phrase) forthwith." Notwithstanding this evidence, I cannot discover any impression of the Ode earlier than that printed in the "Fables," 1700. In the letter to his sons, written from Denham Court, in September, 1697, Dryden says, "After my return to town, I intend to alter a play of Sir Robert Howard's, written long since, and lately put by him into my hands; 'tis called the 'Conquest of China by the Tartars.' It will cost six weeks' study, with the probable benefit of an hundred pounds."

Howard, probably, gave the play to his brother-in-law for this purpose. Dryden, though he seems to have entered upon the design, never completed it. He writes to Tonson, "I have broken off my studies from the 'Conquest of China,' to review Virgil, and bestowed nine entire days upon him. You may have the printed copy you sent me to-morrow morning, if you will come for it yourself; for the printer is a beast, and understands nothing

I can say to him of correcting the press." The new edition of the Virgil (the second impression of the folio) appeared in 1698. The "revisal" of Howard's play was never resumed. We are now approaching the last period of the labours of the great poet. On the conclusion of his Virgil and the production of his far-famed Ode, it is said that he turned his eyes to Homer. It is not improbable that such might have been the case, as in a letter to Charles Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, dated, by Malone, October, 1699, he certainly mentions such an intention. At present, however, he employed himself in the composition of the poems from Chaucer and Boccacio, which were published under the title of the "Fables." Yet the leisure of his last years was not to be undisturbed by controversy. In 1698, Jeremy Collier, a nonjuring clergyman, and the author of the well-known "Ecclesiastical History," and some volumes of "Essays," published "A Short View of the Immorality of the Stage," and singled out the names of Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Dryden for his animadversions. Coarsely written as Collier's book was, there can be no doubt that it rendered good service to dramatic poetry. Dryden felt the force of the argument against himself, and in the subsequent preface to his Fables observes, "I shall say the less of Mr. Collier, because in many things he taxed me justly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine, which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality, and retract them. If he be my enemy let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him

no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in the defence of a bad cause, when I have so often drawn it for a good one." It is pleasing to find this retraction on Dryden's part, although he is somewhat severe on Collier in a subsequent passage. Collier, however, seems to have been pacified by the poet's *amende*.

It might appear unnecessary to allude to such an ignoble name as Sir Richard Blackmore, yet as the knight fancied himself equal to break a lance with Dryden, it may suffice to mention that in 1695 he wrote "Prince Arthur, an Epic Poem," with a violent preface against the licentiousness of the modern stage, and some personal reflections on Dryden. This was unnoticed by the poet, till Sir Richard returned to the attack in his "Satire upon Wit," in which he proposed a *bank for wit* should be established, and that all current literature should be purified, and recoined freed from alloy. In this he was very severe upon Dryden. He therefore received a satirical notice in the preface to the Fables, but a far severer castigation in the last lines the poet ever wrote, to which we shall presently recur.

From many incidental remarks in the prefaces and dedications of his works, Dryden seems to have always had a great affection for his native county, and to have made periodical visits to his friends. Malone has preserved several letters from the poet to his relatives during the last two years of his life, which give us a pleasing insight of his homely character.

It appears that his son Charles had returned from Rome in ill health, and was received with kindness by his country friends. In a letter to his cousin, Mrs. Steward, of Cotterstock, Northamptonshire, dated Candlemas Day (Feb. 2), 1698-9, Dryden writes, "I pass my time sometimes with Ovid and sometimes with our old English poet, Chaucer; translating such stories as best please my fancy; and intend, besides them, to add somewhat of my own, so that it is not impossible but ere the summer be passed, I may come down to you with a volume in my hand, like a dog out of the water, with a duck in his mouth. As for the rarities you promise, if beggars might be choosers, a part of a chine of honest bacon would please my appetite more than all the marrow puddings; for I like them better plain, having a very vulgar stomach." Another letter to the same lady (March 4, 1698-9) acknowledges a welcome present, to which "Cousin Driden of Chesterton added a turkey-hen with eggs, and a good young goose; besides a very kind letter and the news of his own good health, which I value more than all the rest, he being so noble a benefactor to a poor and so undeserving a kinsman, and one of another persuasion in matters of religion." This letter also mentions the progress of his work: "I am still drudging at a book of Miscellanies, which I hope will be well enough; if otherwise, threescore years and seven may be pardoned." A few months later (July 14, 1699) he writes to facetious Mr. Samuel Pepys—

"Padron Mio,

"I remember, last year, when I had the honour of dining with you, you were pleased to recommend to me the character of Chaucer's 'Good Parson.' Any desire of yours is a command to me; and accordingly I have put it into my English, with such additions and alterations as I thought fit. Having translated as many Fables from Ovid, and as many novels from Boccace, and tales from Chaucer, as will make an indifferent large volume in folio, I intend them for the press in Michaelmas Term next. In the meantime my Parson desires the favour of being known to you, and promises, if you find any fault in his character, he will reform it. Whenever you please, he will wait on you, and for the safer conveyance, I will carry him in my pocket; who am,

"My Padron's most obedient servant,

"John Dryden."

The reader might like to see Mr. Pepys' reply.

"Sir, *Friday, July* 14, 1699.

"You truly have obliged mee; and possibly, in saying so I am more in earnest than you can readily think; as verily hopeing, from this your copy of one 'Good Parson,' to fancy some amends made mee for the hourly offence I beare with from the sight of so many lewd originalls. I shall with great pleasure attend you on this occasion, when ere you'l permit; unless you would have the kindness to double it to mee, by suffering my coach to wayte on you (and who you can gayne mee ye same favour from) hither, to a cold chicken and a sallade any noone after Sunday, as being just stepping into the ayre for 2 days, I am, most respectfully,

"Your hono^rd^ and obed^nt^ servant,

"S. P."

There are a few notices of the progress of the work in subsequent letters. In October, 1699, is a letter to Charles Montague, enclosing the verses to John Driden of Chesterton. From the tone of this letter Dryden seems anxious to deprecate Montague's displeasure, and to assure him that the poem was not meant to be offensive towards the Government. He tells him that he had taken such pains with the verses that he was afraid that he had "purged them out of their spirit, as our master Busby used to whip a boy so long till he made him a confirmed blockhead." It is in this letter that he says, "my thoughts at present are fixed upon Homer; and by my translation of the first Iliad,* I find him a poet more according to my genius than Virgil, and consequently hope I may do him more justice in his fiery way of writing, which, as it is liable to more faults, so it is capable of more beauties than the exactness and sobriety of Virgil. Since 'tis for my country's honour, as well as for my own, that I am willing to undertake this task, I despair not of being encouraged in it by your favour." In a letter to his cousin, Mrs. Steward (November 7, 1699) he writes: "If you desire to hear anything more of my affairs, the Earl of Dorset, and your cousin Montague, have both seen the two poems, to the Duchess of Ormond, and my worthy cousin Driden, and are of opinion that I never writ better. My other friends are divided in their judgments which to prefer; but the greater part are for those to my dear kinsman, which I have corrected with so

* Published in the Fables.

much care that they will now be worthy of his sight, and do neither of us any dishonour after our death." To the same lady (Thursday, Dec. 14, 1699); "My book is printing, and my bookseller makes no haste. . . . . I am heartily sorry that a chargeable office is fallen on my cousin Steward.* But my cousin Driden comforts me, that it must have come one time or other like the small-pox; and better have it young than old. I hope it will leave no great marks behind it, and that your fortune will no more feel it than your beauty, by the addition of a year's wearing." The "Fables" were published in the beginning of March, 1699 (1700), and on the 12th of that month the poet writes to Mrs. Steward: "'Tis a week since I received the favour of a letter, which I have not yet acknowledged to you. About that time my new poems were published, which are not come till this day into my hands. They are a debt to you, I must confess; and I am glad, because they are so unworthy to be made a present. Your sisters, I hope, will be so kind to have them conveyed to you, that my writings may have the honour of waiting on you, which is denied to me. The town encourages them with more applause than anything of mine deserves; and particularly my cousin Driden accepted one from me so very indulgently, that it makes me more and more in love with him." There is a note of warning at the conclusion of this letter: "I am neither in health, nor do I want afflictions of any kind." The last letter preserved,

* He was appointed High Sheriff of Northamptonshire in November, 1699.

and probably the last he ever wrote to his cousin, is dated April 11, 1700, three weeks before his death: "The ladies of the town have infected you at a distance; they are all of your opinion, and like my last book of poems better than anything they have formerly seen of mine. I always thought my verses to my cousin Driden were the best of the whole; and to my comfort, the town thinks them so; and he, which pleases me most, is of the same judgment, as appears by a noble present he has sent me, which surprised me, because I did not in the least expect it."

I have given these extracts from the poet's own letters as an interesting comment on the progress of his last, and now most popular work. It should, perhaps, have been mentioned that he undertook it by an arrangement (still extant) with Tonson, dated March 25, 1698-9, by which he was to receive 250 guineas in consideration of 10,000 verses, and an engagement on Tonson's part to make the sum £300 sterling when the book reached a second impression. Dryden's receipt for £268 15*s*. (250 guineas) dated March 24, 1698-9, and witnessed by his son Charles, is preserved by Malone, and in the body of the receipt he appears to have then given into Tonson's hand "about 7500 verses, more or less." The sale of the book was singularly slow, and the second edition was not printed till 1713, when Dryden and all his children were dead; the additional sum stipulated was then paid by Tonson to Lady Sylvius, daughter of one of the Lady Elizabeth Dryden's brothers, for the benefit of the poet's widow, then

in a state of lunacy. The noble volume of "Fables" was dedicated to the last Duke of Ormond, the grandson of the Barzillai of "Absalom and Achitophel," and the son of the heroic Earl of Ossory, friends both, and patrons of Dryden's earlier essays. "There is something affecting," continues Scott, "in a connection so honourably maintained; and the sentiment, as touched by Dryden, is simply pathetic. 'I am not vain enough to boast that I have deserved the value of so illustrious a line; but my fortune is the greater, that for three descents they have been pleased to distinguish my poems from those of other men; and have accordingly made me their peculiar care. May it be permitted me to say, that as your grandfather and father were cherished and adorned by two successive monarchs, so I have been esteemed and patronized by the grandfather, the father, and the son, descended from one of the most ancient, most conspicuous, and most deserving families in Europe.'"

Prefixed to the volume, as an introduction to "Palamon and Arcite," were the beautiful verses addressed to the Duchess of Ormond. It is said that the poet received £500 from the Duke and Duchess. Family tradition also mentions that cousin John Driden of Chesterton made a similar gift in requital of the poem addressed to him, though Malone thinks the sum exaggerated, and that the tradition confounded a present made to the poet himself (and styled by him a "noble present") with a legacy of £500 bequeathed to his son Charles, but which Charles did not live to receive.

It will not be necessary to enter into a detailed criticism of a work so universally known as the "Fables." It is strange, indeed, that, notwithstanding the general applause they met with, and their intrinsic merit, a second edition should have been delayed for so many years. The preface, as usual, is full of interesting matter, and the poet enters into the merits of the several authors from whom he has made selections. It is in this preface that he tells us that Milton had acknowledged to him that Spenser was his original, and that Waller owned that he derived the harmony of his numbers from Fairfax's Tasso. Here, too, we are informed of the rapid declension of Cowley's fame, and that he had already ceased to be read. There is also a passing notice of that poet's want of appreciation of Chaucer. The comparison between Homer and Virgil, coming from such a pen as Dryden's, is very interesting; but though he tells us that the vehemence of the elder poet was more suitable to his temper, and that therefore he translated his first book with greater pleasure than any part of Virgil, we cannot regret, judging from the specimen left us, that he was not permitted to complete the task of an entire version of the Iliad. Not less interesting is the parallel between Ovid and Chaucer. The versions of those parts of Ovid which he has given are very beautiful, though it is much to be regretted that he has chosen the revolting tale of "Cinyras and Myrrha," and indulged in a most unpardonable heightening of the colours of the disgusting details. A similar remark is applicable to "Sigismonda and Guiscardo," from Boccacio, in

which the character of the heroine is invested with a grossness and indelicacy which are not to be found in the original, prone though Boccaccio be to sin in that way. And yet the poet is careful to tell us that he was not aware that he had wilfully offended on the score of indecency or profaneness. But there is one poem in the "Fables" which is unexceptionable. "The Flower and the Leaf," from Chaucer, is surely one of the sweetest poems in the English language. "The poem of Dryden," says Mr. Godwin, "regarded merely as the exhibition of a soothing and delicious luxuriance of fancy, may be classed with the most successful productions of human genius." Dryden himself thought the "Knight's Tale, or Palamon and Arcite," "the noblest of Chaucer's writings, and not much inferior to the 'Ilias' or the 'Æneis.'" The melodious flow and energy of his own version renders it one of the grandest epics in any language. In his transfusion of Chaucer's ideas into modern verse, it is true he may have lost some of that poet's most beautiful characteristics, nor has he always been successful in the additions which he has made to the original; but he must be a cynical critic indeed who will not acknowledge the wondrous merits of the "Palamon and Arcite." The lighter tales of the "Cock and the Fox," and the "Wife of Bath's Tale," are rendered with much sprightliness and humour. Of the fables from Boccaccio, the story of "Theodore and Honoria" is beautifully told and enriched, especially in the description of the supernatural horrors of the apparition. Nor must we omit the well-known tale of

"Cymon and Iphigenia," in which is the oft-quoted passage where Dryden describes the sleeping nymph, and the effect of her beauty upon the clownish Cymon. We must not dismiss the volume of "Fables" without reminding the reader that here he will find the Ode "Alexander's Feast," and the "Character of a good Parson" from Chaucer, written, as we have seen, at the suggestion of Pepys.

The biographer of Dryden has little to record after the publication of the Fables. They appeared early in March, and on April 11, 1700, the poet writes to his cousin, Mrs. Steward:—"I am lame at home, and have not stirr'd abroad this moneth at least." It is probable that he never left his house again, as he died on May 1. But, distracted as he was with pain and troubles, there was to be one more effort of his pen, in which appeared all the fire and vigour of his best years. "Within this moneth," he continues to his cousin, "there will be play'd, for my profit, an old play of Fletcher's, called the 'Pilgrim,' corrected by my friend Mr. Vanbrook,* to which I have added a new Masque; and am to write a new prologue and epilogue." The "Secular Masque" was adapted to the imagined termination of the Seventeenth Century; "it being supposed," says Scott, "(as by many in our own time) that the century was concluded so soon as the hundredth year commenced,—as if a play was ended at the *beginning of the fifth act*." It contains "a beautiful and spirited delineation of

* Sir John Vanbrugh. Compare *Marlbrook* for Marlborough.

the reigns of James I, Charles I, and Charles II, in which the influence of Diana, Mars, and Venus, are supposed to have respectively predominated." It is clear, from the passage to Mrs. Steward above quoted, that the play had not appeared on April 11, and therefore Mr. Bell is wrong in his supposition of its being acted on March 25. It is equally apparent that Dryden must have written the Prologue and Epilogue within twenty days of his death; and it is a melancholy reflection that his last hours should have been employed in the bitterness of controversy, which had pursued him throughout his poetical career. The Prologue contains a severe castigation of Blackmore; and in the Epilogue, in which Collier is handled with more courtesy, the poet (to use Mr. Bell's words) "indignantly casts back upon the court the responsibility of having originally infected and debased the stage with its vices."

The end had now come. The lameness which he mentions in his letter to Mrs. Steward, in the beginning of April, resulted in erysipelas supervening upon gout, and this terminated in a gangrene in one of his toes. To prevent mortification, an eminent surgeon, Mr. Hobbes, suggested amputation of the limb, to which Dryden would not consent, observing that he had not long to live in the course of nature, and he was unwilling to prolong life by the chance of a doubtful and painful operation. At three o'clock on Wednesday morning, May 1, 1700, he calmly expired. On a monument in Tichmarsh church, Northamptonshire, erected by his relative Mrs. Creed, is the following account of the

last scene:—"When nature could be no longer supported, he received the notice of his approaching dissolution with sweet submission and entire resignation to the Divine Will; and he took so tender and obliging a farewell of his friends as none but he himself could have expressed, of which sorrowful number I was one."

Apocryphal stories have induced Dryden's biographers to suppose that he died in such indigent circumstances that his family could ill afford to bear the expenses of his funeral. But a little reflection would show that this could hardly have been the fact; he had very shortly before his death received considerable sums of money in requital for portions of his last great work, and it is not very probable that his many wealthy relatives, and especially John Driden of Chesterton, with whom he was upon most affectionate terms, would have suffered his remains to have been unhonoured by a decent interment. A public funeral in Westminster Abbey is a very different question. It is difficult to arrive at the exact truth; but it would appear that very shortly after his death his family consented to the request for a public funeral. In the register of the College of Physicians is the following entry, "May 3, 1700," (that is, two days after his decease) "Comitiis censoriis ordinariis. At the request of several persons of quality, that Mr. Dryden might be carried from the College of Physicians to be interred at Westminster, it was unanimously granted by the President and Censors." This entry at once refutes the absurd story of the private funeral being interrupted by the second Lord Jefferies and his

drunken companions. The persons of quality are generally supposed to have been Charles Montague (afterwards Lord Halifax), Dorset, Jefferies, and others, who entered into a subscription for the purpose.* The body was accordingly removed to Physicians' Hall, where it was embalmed, and lay in state till May 13, when Dr. Garth pronounced a Latin oration over it, and, it is said, though apparently upon no sufficient authority, the last Ode of the Third Book of Horace was sung. The procession, attended by nearly fifty carriages, and preceded by a band of music, then moved to Westminster Abbey, and the remains of the poet were deposited in a grave between those of Chaucer and Cowley.

Dryden died intestate, and his effects were administered to by his eldest and best-beloved son Charles, the only one in England at the time of his death. His provision for his family may have been slender, but it is evident that they were not left to that abject penury which ill-founded traditions would seem to have fixed upon his memory. The inhabitants of Gerrard Street, Soho, in that day occupied some position in society, and he had lived in the same house (now No. 43) from the period of his marriage; he had still his little patrimonial estate in Northamptonshire, the tenant of which in Malone's time used to mention the affection with which his grandfather, who rented under Dryden, spoke of the poet: "He was the easiest and the

* The undertaker's (Russell's) bill for "Mr. Dryden's Funeralls," amounting to 45*l.* 17*s.*, is printed by Malone and Scott.

kindest landlord in the world, and never raised the rent during the whole time he possessed the estate." He had, moreover, a small property in Wiltshire, the settlement of the Lady Elizabeth on her marriage. These, Scott considers, brought in about £100 a-year; "enough in those times to support his family in decent frugality."

Shortly after the poet's death his widow, the Lady Elizabeth, became insane; in which state she lingered till the summer of 1714, when she died, according to Malone, in her seventy-ninth year. It may be interesting to give a short account of Dryden's three sons, upon the death of the last of whom his issue became extinct. Charles, the eldest, was born at his grandfather's, the Earl of Berkshire's seat, Charlton, Wiltshire, in 1665. He was educated at Westminster, under Dr. Busby, and elected to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1683. He wrote a few pieces, detailed by Malone, the more conspicuous of which are a Latin poem on Lord Arlington's Gardens, published in the Second Miscellany; and a version of the Seventh Satire of Juvenal in his father's translation. He became a Roman Catholic, but when it is not clear. About 1692 he went to Italy, and through the interest of his mother's relative, Cardinal Howard, was made chamberlain of the household to Pope Innocent XII.; he returned to England in ill-health in 1698, and was present at his father's death, to whose estate, we have seen, he administered. In 1701, Granville gave him the profits of the author's night of an alteration of Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice." He was drowned in attempting to swim across the Thames, at Datchet, on August 20, 1704.

The second son, John, was born in 1667, or 1668, and was also educated at Westminster, from whence he proceeded to Oxford in 1685, where he became a private pupil of the well-known Obadiah Walker, Master of University College. It is probable that through Walker's influence he became a Roman Catholic, and this circumstance may have been the cause of his father's conversion. He followed his brother to Rome, and became his deputy in the Papal household. He wrote a version of the Fourteenth Satire of Juvenal, for his father's translation; and also a comedy entitled, "The Husband his own Cuckold," acted in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in 1696, for which his father furnished a prologue, and Congreve the epilogue. According to Scott he travelled through Sicily and Malta in 1700-1, and his journal was printed in 1706; but it is remarkable that he "never mentions his father's name, nor makes the least allusion to his very recent death." He died at Rome shortly after this tour.

Erasmus Henry, the poet's third and youngest son, was born May 2, 1669, and was presented by Charles II. to a nomination at the Charter-house shortly after the publication of "Absalom and Achitophel." He does not appear to have been at either University, but to have followed his brothers to Rome, where he became captain of the Pope's guards, and remained till his brother John's death. The period of his return to England is not clear; but upon the death of Sir Robert Driden, the poet's cousin, in 1708, he succeeded to the baronetcy, but not to the estate, of Canons-Ashby, which had been devised by Sir Robert to Edward

Dryden, the eldest son of the poet's younger brother Erasmus. "Thus," says Scott, "if the author had lived a few years longer, his pecuniary embarrassments would have been embittered by his succeeding to the honours of his family without any means of sustaining the rank they gave him." Sir Robert's disposal of the estate may have probably originated from his hereditary Puritan dislike to the Roman Catholic religion. Sir Erasmus Henry Dryden, however, seems to have been the object of his cousin's solicitude, for he resided with Edward Dryden at Canons-Ashby till his death in 1710. From certain indications in the family papers, Malone infers that the baronet suffered from his mother's insanity, and had resigned his affairs into his cousin's hands. Thus in little more than ten years from his death the poet's direct line became extinct. Upon the death of Sir Erasmus Henry, the title reverted to Erasmus his uncle, the poet's brother, upon whose decease, in 1718, it devolved upon his grandson John (the eldest son of the above-mentioned Edward), in whose person the title and estates were once more rejoined. Sir John Dryden survived all his brothers, and died without issue at Canons-Ashby, March 20, 1770. Upon his death the title became extinct; but the estate was devised to his niece, the daughter of his youngest brother Bevil, who married Mr. John Turner, brother of Sir Gregory Page Turner. Mr. Turner assumed the name of Dryden, and was created a baronet in 1795, and his grandson, Sir Henry Edward Leigh Dryden, is the fourth Baronet of the new creation, and the present representative of the illustrious name of DRYDEN.

There are several portraits of Dryden extant, from which we may form some judgment of his personal appearance. The best known is that by Kneller, painted for Jacob Tonson, and still at Bayfordbury Hall, Herts. He is here represented in his waving grey hair, as he appeared about two years before his death, and Scott thinks that it especially bespeaks the look and features of genius.

In his earlier youth he seems to have been handsome and of a pleasing countenance; but in advancing years he had grown corpulent, and this, coupled with the shortness of his stature, obtained for him the nicknames of "Little Bayes," and "Poet Squab." There is a look of melancholy in his later portraits, probably induced by distress and disappointment.

His private character is admitted on all hands to have been most amiable. He was kind and affectionate in all the relations of domestic life. As Mr. Mitford remarks, a biography of Dryden would be imperfect without the insertion "of the delightful character of him that has been so minutely sketched by the affectionate and grateful hand of Congreve, who during the last ten years of his life had lived in close habits of intimacy with him;" a portrait from the pen of friendship, it is true, "yet, if we consider all the circumstances of Dryden's life, we cannot deem it much exaggerated,"* a portrait "such as adds our love of his manners to our admiration of his genius."†

"— Mr. Dryden had personal qualities to challenge both love and esteem from all who were truly

* Scott. † Johnson.

acquainted with him. He was of a nature exceedingly humane and compassionate, easily forgiving injuries, and capable of a prompt and sincere reconciliation with those who had offended him. Such a temperament is the only solid foundation of all moral virtues and sociable endowments. His friendship, when he professed it, went much beyond his professions, though his hereditary income was little more than a bare competency. As his reading had been extensive, so was he very happy in a memory tenacious of every thing that he read. He was not more possessed of knowledge than communicative of it, but then his communication of it was by no means pedantic, or imposed upon the conversation: but just such, and went so far as by the natural turn of the discourse in which he was engaged, it was necessarily promoted or required. He was extremely ready and gentle in his correction of the errors of any writer, who thought fit to consult him, and felt as ready and patient to admit of the reprehension of others in respect of his own oversights or mistakes. He was of very easy, I may say, of very pleasing access, but somewhat slow, and as it were diffident in his advances to others. He had something in his nature that abhorred intrusion into any society whatever: indeed, it is to be regretted that he was rather blameable in the other extreme: for by that means he was personally less known, and consequently his character will become liable to misapprehension and misrepresentation. To the best of my knowledge and observation, he was, of all men that ever I knew, one of the most modest and

the most easily to be discountenanced in his approaches either to his superiors or his equals. As to Mr. Dryden's writings, I shall not take upon me to speak of them: for to say little of them, would not be to do them right, and to say all that I ought to say, would be to be very voluminous. But I may venture to say in general terms, that no man hath written in our language so much and so various matter, and in so various manners so well. Another thing, I may say, was very peculiar to him, which is, that his parts did not decline with his years, but that he was an improving writer to his last, even to near seventy years of age; improving even in fire and imagination as well as in judgment—witness his Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, and his Fables, his last performances. He was equally excellent in verse and prose. His prose had all the clearness imaginable, together with all the nobleness of expression, all the graces and ornaments proper and peculiar to it, without deviating into the language or diction of poetry. I make this observation only to distinguish his style from that of many poetical writers, who meaning to write harmoniously in prose, do in truth often write mere blank verse.

"His versification and his numbers he could learn of nobody; for he first possessed those talents in perfection in our tongue, and they who have best succeeded in them, since his time, have been indebted to his example; and the more they have been able to imitate him, the better they have succeeded.

"As his style in prose is always specifically different from his style in poetry; so on the other

hand, in his poems, his diction is, whenever his subject requires it, so sublime and so truly poetical, that its essence, like that of pure gold, cannot be destroyed. Take his verses and divest them of their rhymes, disjoint them in their numbers, transpose their expressions, make what arrangement and disposition you please of his words, yet shall there eternally be poetry, and something which will be found incapable of being resolved into absolute prose, an incontestable characteristic of a truly poetical genius.

"I will say but one word more in general of his writings, which is, that what he has done in any one species or distinct kind, would have been sufficient to have acquired him a great name. If he had written nothing but his prefaces, or nothing but his songs, or his prologues, each of them would have entitled him to the preference and distinction of excelling in his kind."

One or two observations on the Poet's character may not be unnecessary.

Though nothing can excuse the licentiousness of his writings, it is pleasing to know that his personal morality was unimpeachable. His many enemies would have been only too glad to have fixed such a stain upon his life. It is strange that a man of such a modest disposition as Dryden undoubtedly was should have prostituted his great talents to the prevailing vices of the age; but such unhappily was the case. "His works," observes Johnson, "afford too many examples of dissolute licentiousness and abject adulation; but they were probably, like his merriment, artificial and con-

strained—the effects of study and meditation, and his trade rather than his pleasure. Of the mind that can trade in corruption, and can deliberately pollute itself with ideal wickedness, for the sake of spreading contagion in society, I wish not to conceal or excuse the depravity. Such degradation of the dignity of genius, such abuse of superlative abilities, cannot be contemplated but with grief and indignation. What consolation can be had, Dryden has afforded by living to repent, and to testify his repentance." This is only partially true. Dryden expressed his penitence for the licentiousness of his dramas: but we must remember that not one of his works is exempt from this terrible disfigurement. His translations from Juvenal, Lucretius, Ovid, and Theocritus, seem to have been selected for the most objectionable passages, and treated in language exceeding the indelicacy of the originals. It is surely no palliation to say that this was his trade rather than his pleasure. It is simply unaccountable. And yet it is clear that these gross violations of decency and morality were looked upon with no unfavourable eye by society as it was then constituted; for the poet writes to his cousin Mrs. Steward: "The ladies of the town have infected you at a distance. They are all of your opinion, and like my last book of poems* better than anything they have formerly seen of mine." And yet in this very volume we find some of the grossest productions of his pen. Strange, then, as it may seem, it is satisfactory to be assured that his private moral character was untainted by

* The Fables; published, 1700.

the vices and impurity so painfully displayed in his writings. His shy reserve and modesty of demeanour were probably constitutional, as he confesses to his dulness and sluggishness in conversation. It is true that he was quite conscious of the greatness of his genius; but we need not ill-naturedly suppose with Johnson that "he probably did not offer his conversation, because he expected it to be solicited; and he retired from a cold reception, not submissive, but indignant, with such deference of his own greatness as made him unwilling to expose it to neglect or violation." Probably from his good birth, and connection with the Howard family, as much as his prominent position in literature, he was admitted into the highest society of the day,—a fact which excited the envy and malignity of his rivals.

Of his personal habits we know but little. When in London, his mornings were spent in study, and after dining with his family, he usually went to Will's Coffee-house, the resort of the wits of the time. Dr. Johnson tells us, "Of the only two men whom I have found to whom he was personally known, one told me that at the house which he frequented, called Will's Coffee-house, the appeal upon any literary dispute was made to him; and the other related that his arm-chair, which in the winter had a settled and prescriptive place by the fire, was, in the summer, placed in the balcony, and that he called the two places his winter and his summer seat. This is all the intelligence which his two survivors afforded me!" The ever-diligent Malone made the notable discovery that Dryden was a great taker of snuff, which he prepared him-

self; and a letter to Tonson certainly countenances the truth of, at least, a part of the discovery, for the poet writes to him to secure "three pounds of snuff, the same of which I had one pound from you."

Dryden was very partial to his native county, Northamptonshire, to which he paid periodical visits, as also to the seats of many of his friends in other counties. Fishing was his favourite pursuit; and his skill, on one occasion at least, stood him in good stead, for he tells old Jacob Tonson, "I am sleepy all this day, having been obliged to sit up all last night almost, out of civility to strangers who were benighted, and to resign my bed to them; and if I had not taken a very lusty pike that day, they must have gone supperless to bed, foure ladyes and two gentlemen."

We have but scanty details of his conversation. It is to be regretted indeed that we do not know more of the private life of one who evidently possessed a sincere and good heart. A few passages in his letters evidence the affection he bore to all his family; and the sincerity of his convictions on his change of religion is best attested by his unswerving attachment to his new faith, while the unworthy motives which were so long attributed to him have been entirely refuted by the discoveries of his latest and very excellent biographer, Mr. Robert Bell.

Few great writers have been so ably criticised as Dryden; and the verdict of successive generations has placed him conspicuous in the foremost rank of English poets. If he be somewhat deficient in creative genius, he is unsurpassed, and probably unsurpassable, in the wondrous vigour and strength which

grasps and bears along everything with it. According to Dr. Johnson, he had "a mind very comprehensive by nature, and much enriched with acquired knowledge. His compositions are the effects of a vigorous genius operating upon large materials. The power that predominated in his intellectual operations was rather strong reason than quick sensibility. Upon all occasions that were presented he studied rather than felt, and produced sentiments not such as nature enforces, but meditation supplies. Dryden's was not one of the *gentle bosoms*. He is, therefore, with all his variety of excellence, not often pathetic." But surely his vigorous tone of thought, the nervous grandeur of his versification, and his complete mastery of language, make ample amends for his want of sensibility. Who can forget that it was—

> "Dryden taught to join
> The varying verse, the full resounding line,
> The long majestic march, and energy divine"?

"Of Dryden's works," observes Johnson, "it was said by Pope that he 'could select from them better specimens of every mode of poetry than any other English writer could supply.' Perhaps no nation ever produced a writer that enriched his language with such a variety of models. To him we owe the improvement, perhaps the completion, of our metre, the refinement of our language, and much of the correctness of our sentiments. By him we were taught '*sapere et fari*,' to think naturally and express forcibly. Though Davies has reasoned in rhyme before him, it may perhaps be maintained that he was the first who joined argument with poetry. He showed us the true bounds of a translator's

liberty. What was said of Rome, adorned by Augustus, may be applied, by an easy metaphor, to English poetry embellished by Dryden: '*Lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit;*' 'He found it brick,* and he left it marble.'"

Of Johnson's parallel between Dryden and Pope, in his Life of the latter poet, it may be said that he who is unacquainted with it cannot lay any pretension to a knowledge of English literature, and has yet an exquisite delight in store for him.

To multiply quotations in praise of Dryden, or to write criticisms on him whose fame is imperishable, and can neither suffer by detraction nor be raised by eulogy, appears at once needless and impertinent. The following passages, however, cited by Mr. Mitford, are more than ordinarily interesting: "The English tongue, as it stands at present, is greatly his (Dryden's) debtor. He first gave it regular harmony and discovered its latent powers. It was his pen that formed the Congreves, the Priors, and the Addisons, who succeeded him; and, had it not been for Dryden, we never should have known a Pope, at least in the meridian lustre he now displays. But Dryden's excellencies as a writer were not confined to poetry alone. There is in his prose writings an ease and elegance that have never yet been so well united in works of taste or criticism."† "Dryden's versification," says Armstrong,‡ "I take to be the most musical that has yet appeared in rhyme: round, sweet, pompous, spirited, and various, it flows with such a happy

* Rather, "rubble."

† Goldsmith's Bee, p. 288.

‡ Essays, p. 162.

volubility, such an animated and masterly negligence, as, I am afraid, will not soon be excelled. From the fineness of his ear, his prose, too, is perhaps the sweetest, the most mellow and sonorous, that the English language has yet produced." Little more need be added. The beauty of his imagery and the rich melody of his verse, the power which makes itself felt, are not the only characteristics of Dryden's writings. His purely Anglo-Saxon idiom is of great value in a philological view at the present day, when so many innovations are being introduced to the deterioration of our language; and no works could be better studied, apart from their licentiousness, for the formation of style, than those of "glorious John."

The following tribute, from the pen of one whose masculine intellect could well appreciate the merits of his great master, may fitly close our page:—

"Here let me bend, great Dryden, at thy shrine,
Thou dearest name to all the tuneful Nine!
What if some dull lines in cold order creep,
And with his theme the poet seems to sleep?
Still, when his subject rises proud to view,
With equal strength the poet rises too.
With strong invention, noblest vigour fraught,
Thought still springs up, and rises out of thought;
Numbers ennobling numbers in their course,
In varied sweetness flow, in varied force;
The powers of genius, and of judgment join,
And the whole art of poetry is thine." *

* Churchill.

UPON THE DEATH OF LORD HASTINGS.*

Must noble Hastings immaturely die,
The honour of his ancient family,
Beauty and learning thus together meet,
To bring a winding for a wedding sheet?
Must virtue prove death's harbinger? must she,
With him expiring, feel mortality?
Is death, sin's wages, grace's now? shall art
Make us more learned, only to depart?
If merit be disease; if virtue death;
To be good, not to be; who'd then bequeath
Himself to discipline? who'd not esteem
Labour a crime? study self-murder deem?
Our noble youth now have pretence to be
Dunces securely, ignorant healthfully.
Rare linguist, whose worth speaks itself, whose [praise,
Though not his own, all tongues besides do raise:
Than whom great Alexander may seem less:
Who conquer'd men, but not their languages.

* Son of Ferdinand, Earl of Huntingdon: he died before his father in 1649, being then in his twentieth year, and on the day preceding that which had been appointed for the celebration of his marriage.

In his mouth nations spake; his tongue might be
Interpreter to Greece, France, Italy.
His native soil was the four parts o' the earth;
All Europe was too narrow for his birth.
A young apostle; and with reverence may
I speak 't, inspir'd with gift of tongues, as they.
Nature gave him, a child, what men in vain
Oft strive, by art though further'd, to obtain.
His body was an orb, his sublime soul
Did move on virtue's and on learning's pole:
Whose regular motions better to our view,
Than Archimedes' sphere, the heavens did shew.
Graces and virtues, languages and arts,
Beauty and learning, fill'd up all the parts.
Heaven's gifts, which do like falling stars appear
Scatter'd in others; all, as in their sphere,
Were fix'd, conglobate in his soul; and thence
Shone through his body, with sweet influence;
Letting their glories so on each limb fall,
The whole frame render'd was celestial.
Come, learned Ptolemy, and trial make,
If thou this hero's altitude canst take:
But that transcends thy skill; thrice happy all,
Could we but prove thus astronomical.
Liv'd Tycho now, struck with this ray, which shone
More bright i' the morn', than others beam at noon,
He'd take his astrolabe, and seek out here

35 *Were fix'd, conglobate in his soul*] This word is used in the second book of Lucretius, ver. 153, in the same sense.

'Sed complexa meant inter se conque globata.'

John Warton.

What new star 'twas did gild our hemisphere.
Replenish'd then with such rare gifts as these,
Where was room left for such a foul disease?
The nation's sin hath drawn that veil, which shrouds
Our day-spring in so sad benighting clouds.
Heaven would no longer trust its pledge; but thus
Recall'd it; rapt its Ganymede from us.
Was there no milder way but the small-pox,
The very filth'ness of Pandora's box?
So many spots, like næves, our Venus' soil,
One jewel set off with so many a foil;
Blisters with pride swell'd, which through's flesh did sprout
Like rose-buds, stuck i' the lily skin about.
Each little pimple had a tear in it,
To wail the fault its rising did commit:
Which, rebel like, with its own lord at strife,
Thus made an insurrection 'gainst his life.
Or were these gems sent to adorn his skin,
The cabinet of a richer soul within?
No comet need foretell his change drew on,
Whose corpse might seem a constellation.
O! had he died of old, how great a strife [life?
Had been, who from his death should draw their
Who should, by one rich draught, become whate'er
Seneca, Cato, Numa, Cæsar, were?
Learn'd, virtuous, pious, great; and have by this
A universal metempsychosis.
Must all these aged sires in one funeral
Expire? all die in one so young, so small?

Who, had he liv'd his life out, his great fame
Had swoll'n 'bove any Greek or Roman name.
But hasty winter, with one blast, hath brought
The hopes of autumn, summer, spring, to nought.
Thus fades the oak i' the sprig, i' the blade the corn;
Thus without young, this Phœnix dies, new born.
Must then old three-legg'd grey-beards with their gout,
Catarrhs, rheums, aches, live three ages out?
Time's offals, only fit for the hospital!
Or to hang antiquaries' rooms withal!
Must drunkards, lechers, spent with sinning, live
With such helps as broths, possets, physic give?
None live, but such as should die? shall we meet
With none but ghostly fathers in the street?
Grief makes me rail: sorrow will force its way;
And show'rs of tears tempestuous sighs best lay.
The tongue may fail; but overflowing eyes
Will weep out lasting streams of elegies.
But thou, O virgin-widow, left alone,
Now thy belov'd, heaven-ravish'd spouse is gone,
Whose skilful sire in vain strove to apply
Med'cines, when thy balm was no remedy,
With greater than Platonic love, O wed
His soul, though not his body, to thy bed:
Let that make thee a mother; bring thou forth
The ideas of his virtue, knowledge, worth;
Transcribe the original in new copies; give
Hastings o' the better part: so shall he live
In's nobler half; and the great grandsire be

Of an heroic divine progeny:
An issue, which to eternity shall last,
Yet but the irradiations which he cast.
Erect no mausoleums: for his best
Monument is his spouse's marble breast.*

TO HIS FRIEND JOHN HODDESDON,

ON HIS DIVINE EPIGRAMS.†

Thou hast inspir'd me with thy soul, and I
Who ne'er before could ken of poetry,
Am grown so good proficient, I can lend
A line in commendation of my friend.
Yet 'tis but of the second hand; if ought
There be in this, 'tis from thy fancy brought.
Good thief, who dar'st, Prometheus-like, aspire,
And fill thy poems with celestial fire:

* The verses on Lord Hastings in the 'Lachrymæ Musarum,' are subscribed 'Johannes Dryden. Scholæ Westm. alumnus.'—It appears from a note of the editor's, that they were sent at a late period in the year (1649), after a great part of the book was printed off, and when it was just ready for publication. *Malone.*

† Mr. Hoddesdon's poetical effusions were published in 8vo. 1650, under the title of 'Sion and Parnassus, or Epigrams on several texts of the Old and New Testament.' To this book is prefixed the author's engraved portrait, 'Ætat. 18.' by which it appears that he and Dryden were nearly of the same age. *M.*

Enliven'd by these sparks divine, their rays
Add a bright lustre to thy crown of bays.
Young eaglet, who thy nest thus soon forsook,
So lofty and divine a course hast took
As all admire, before the down begin
To peep, as yet, upon thy smoother chin;
And, making heaven thy aim, hast had the grace
To look the sun of righteousness i' th' face.
What may we hope, if thou goest on thus fast,
Scriptures at first; enthusiasms at last!
Thou hast commenc'd, betimes, a saint, go on,
Mingling diviner streams with Helicon.
That they who view what Epigrams here be,
May learn to make like, in just praise of thee.
Reader, I've done, nor longer will withhold
Thy greedy eyes; looking on this pure gold
Thou'lt know adult'rate copper, which, like this,
Will only serve to be a foil to his.

HEROIC STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF OLIVER CROMWELL.

WRITTEN AFTER HIS FUNERAL.

I.

And now 'tis time; for their officious haste,
Who would before have borne him to the sky,
Like eager Romans, ere all rites were past,
Did let too soon the sacred eagle fly.

Though our best notes are treason to his fame,
Join'd with the loud applause of public voice;
Since heaven, what praise we offer to his name,
Hath render'd too authentic by its choice.

Though in his praise no arts can liberal be,
Since they, whose muses have the highest flown,
Add not to his immortal memory,
But do an act of friendship to their own.

Yet 'tis our duty, and our interest too,
Such monuments as we can build to raise;
Lest all the world prevent what we should do,
And claim a title in him by their praise.

How shall I then begin, or where conclude,
To draw a fame so truly circular?
For in a round what order can be show'd,
Where all the parts so equal perfect are?

His grandeur he deriv'd from heaven alone;
For he was great, ere fortune made him so:
And wars, like mists that rise against the sun,
Made him but greater seem, not greater grow.

No borrow'd bays his temples did adorn,
But to our crown he did fresh jewels bring;
Nor was his virtue poison'd soon as born,
With the too early thoughts of being king.

Fortune (that easy mistress to the young,
But to her ancient servants coy and hard)

Him at that age her favourites rank'd among,
When she her best-lov'd Pompey did discard.

He, private, mark'd the fault of others sway,
And set as sea-marks for himself to shun:
Not like rash monarchs, who their youth betray
By acts their age too late would wish undone.

And yet dominion was not his design;
We owe that blessing, not to him, but heaven,
Which to fair acts unsought rewards did join;
Rewards, that less to him than us were given.

Our former chiefs, like sticklers of the war,
First fought to inflame the parties, then to poise:
The quarrel lov'd, but did the cause abhor;
And did not strike to hurt, but make a noise.

War, our consumption, was their gainful trade:
We inward bled, whilst they prolong'd our pain;
He fought to end our fighting, and essay'd
To staunch the blood by breathing of the vein.

[36] *By acts their age too late would wish undone*] Infectum volet esse, dolor quod suaserit et mens. Hor. I. Ep. ii. l. 60. *J. W.*

[48] *To staunch the blood by breathing of the vein*] The loyalists supposed that by this line Dryden meant to allude to Cromwell's *murder of his sovereign*. Thus in 'The Laureat,' or 'Jack Squabb's History in a little drawn, Down to his evening, from his early dawn,' ver. 21—25.

'Nay, had our Charles, by heaven's severe decree,
Been found, and murther'd in the royal tree,
Even thou hadst prais'd the fact; his father slain,
Thou call'st but gently breathing of a vein.' *M.*

Swift and resistless through the land he past,
Like that bold Greek who did the East subdue,
And made to battles such heroic haste,
As if on wings of victory he flew.

He fought secure of fortune as of fame:
Still, by new maps, the island might be shown,
Of conquests, which he strew'd where'er he came,
Thick as the galaxy with stars is sown.

His palms, though under weights they did not stand,
Still thriv'd; no winter could his laurels fade:
Heaven in his portrait show'd a workman's hand,
And drew it perfect, yet without a shade.

Peace was the prize of all his toil and care,
Which war had banish'd, and did now restore:
Bologna's walls thus mounted in the air,
To seat themselves more surely than before.

Her safety rescued Ireland to him owes;
And treacherous Scotland to no interest true,
Yet blest that fate which did his arms dispose
Her land to civilize, as to subdue.

Nor was he like those stars which only shine,
When to pale mariners they storms portend:
He had his calmer influence, and his mien
Did love and majesty together blend.

'Tis true, his countenance did imprint an awe;
And naturally all souls to his did bow,
As wands of divination downward draw,
And point to beds where sovereign gold doth grow.

When past all offerings to Feretrian Jove,
He Mars depos'd, and arms to gowns made yield;
Successful councils did him soon approve
As fit for close intrigues, as open field.

To suppliant Holland he vouchsaf'd a peace,
Our once bold rival of the British main,
Now tamely glad her unjust claim to cease,
And buy our friendship with her idol, gain.

Fame of the asserted sea through Europe blown,
Made France and Spain ambitious of his love;
Each knew that side must conquer he would own;
And for him fiercely, as for empire, strove.

No sooner was the Frenchman's cause embrac'd,
Than the light Monsieur the grave Don outweigh'd:
His fortune turn'd the scale where'er 'twas cast;
Though Indian mines were in the other laid.

When absent, yet we conquer'd in his right:
For though some meaner artist's skill were shown
In mingling colours, or in placing light;
Yet still the fair designment was his own.

[96] *designment*] He has borrowed this word from Spenser, F. Q. ii. xi. 10.

' 'Gainst which the second troupe *dessignment* makes :'

That is, *plot*. Dryden, however, uses it simply for *design* or *plan*. It should be added, that *dessignment* is the reading of Spenser's 2nd edition; as the first reads, without perspicuity, *assignment*. *Todd*.

For from all tempers he could service draw;
The worth of each, with its alloy, he knew,
And, as the confidant of Nature, saw
How she complexions did divide and brew.

Or he their single virtues did survey,
By intuition, in his own large breast,
Where all the rich ideas of them lay,
That were the rule and measure to the rest.

When such heroic virtue heaven sets out,
The stars, like commons, sullenly obey;
Because it drains them when it comes about,
And therefore is a tax they seldom pay.

From this high spring our foreign conquests flow,
Which yet more glorious triumphs do portend;
Since their commencement to his arms they owe,
If springs as high as fountains may ascend.

He made us freemen of the continent,
Whom nature did like captives treat before;
To nobler preys the English lion sent,
And taught him first in Belgian walks to roar.

That old unquestion'd pirate of the land,
Proud Rome, with dread the fate of Dunkirk heard;

113 *He made us freemen, &c.*] We may be said to have been made freemen of the continent by the taking of Dunkirk, which was wrested from the Spaniards by the united forces of France and England, and delivered up to the latter in the beginning of 1658. *Derrick.*

And trembling wish'd behind more Alps to stand,
Although an Alexander were her guard.

By his command we boldly cross'd the line,
And bravely fought where southern stars arise;
We trac'd the far-fetch'd gold unto the mine,
And that which brib'd our fathers made our prize.

Such was our prince; yet own'd a soul above
The highest acts it could produce to show:
Thus poor mechanic arts in public move,
Whilst the deep secrets beyond practice go.

Nor died he when his ebbing fame went less,
But when fresh laurels courted him to live:
He seem'd but to prevent some new success,
As if above what triumphs earth could give.

His latest victories still thickest came,
As near the centre motion doth increase;
'Till he, press'd down by his own weighty name,
Did, like the vestal, under spoils decease.

But first the ocean as a tribute sent
The giant prince of all her watery herd;
And the isle, when her protecting genius went,
Upon his obsequies loud sighs conferr'd.

No civil broils have since his death arose,
But faction now by habit does obey;
And wars have that respect for his repose,
As winds for halcyons, when they breed at sea.

[120] *Although an Alexander, &c.*] At this time Alexander VII. sat in the papal chair. *D.*

His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest,
His name a great example stands, to show
How strangely high endeavours may be blest,
Where piety and valour jointly go.

ASTRÆA REDUX.

A POEM

ON THE HAPPY RESTORATION AND RETURN OF HIS SACRED MAJESTY CHARLES II. 1660.

Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna. VIRG.

The last great age foretold by sacred rhymes
Renews its finish'd course; Saturnian times
Roll round again.

Now with a general peace the world was blest,
While ours, a world divided from the rest,
A dreadful quiet felt, and worser far
Than arms, a sullen interval of war:
Thus when black clouds draw down the lab'ring skies,
Ere yet abroad the winged thunder flies,
A horrid stillness first invades the ear,
And in that silence we the tempest fear.

[1] *Now with a general*] *Waller*, as well as Dryden, altered his sentiments, and changed his notes, on the Restoration; and when the king hinted to him the inferiority of his second poem to the former, answered, 'Poets, Sir, succeed better in fiction than in truth.' What notice Charles took of Dryden's Astræa we are ignorant. *Dr. Joseph Warton.*

The ambitious Swede, like restless billows tost,
On this hand gaining what on that he lost,
Though in his life he blood and ruin breath'd,
To his now guideless kingdom peace bequeath'd.
And heaven, that seem'd regardless of our fate,
For France and Spain did miracles create;
Such mortal quarrels to compose in peace,
As nature bred, and interest did increase.
We sigh'd to hear the fair Iberian bride
Must grow a lily to the lily's side,
While our cross stars denied us Charles his bed,
Whom our first flames and virgin love did wed.
For his long absence church and state did groan;
Madness the pulpit, faction seiz'd the throne:
Experienc'd age in deep despair was lost,
To see the rebel thrive, the loyal crost:
Youth, that with joys had unacquainted been,
Envied gray hairs that once good days had seen;
We thought our sires, not with their own content,

[22] *Madness the pulpit*] From the numerous sermons preached before the parliament, particularly from 1640 to 1650, a variety of curious examples might be adduced to prove the justness of Dryden's assertion. And who can wonder at this assertion, when he is told that notifications of the following kind were affixed on walls and door posts: 'On such a day such a brewer's clerk *exerciseth*; such a tailor *expoundeth*; such a waterman *teacheth*!' See the Preface to Featly's *Dippers Dipt*, 4to. 1647. For a minute account of the ravings and rantings of many of the preachers before the parliament, the reader is referred to a collection of extracts from their discourses, entitled *Evangelium Armatum*, printed soon after the Restoration of King Charles II. *T.*

Had, ere we came to age, our portion spent.
Nor could our nobles hope their bold attempt,
Who ruin'd crowns would coronets exempt.
For when by their designing leaders taught
To strike at power which for themselves they sought,
The vulgar, gull'd into rebellion, arm'd;
Their blood to action by the prize was warm'd.
The sacred purple then and scarlet gown,
Like sanguine dye, to elephants was shown.
Thus when the bold Typhœus scal'd the sky,
And forc'd great Jove from his own heaven to fly,
(What king, what crown from treason's reach is free,
If Jove and Heaven can violated be?)
The lesser gods, that shar'd his prosperous state,
All suffer'd in the exil'd Thunderer's fate.
The rabble now such freedom did enjoy,
As winds at sea, that use it to destroy:
Blind as the Cyclop, and as wild as he,
They own'd a lawless savage liberty.
Like that our painted ancestors so priz'd,
Ere empire's arts their breasts had civiliz'd.
How great were then our Charles his woes, who thus
Was forc'd to suffer for himself and us!
He, toss'd by fate, and hurried up and down,
Heir to his father's sorrows, with his crown,
Could taste no sweets of youth's desired age;
But found his life too true a pilgrimage.
Unconquer'd yet in that forlorn estate,
His manly courage overcame his fate.
His wounds he took, like Romans, on his breast,

Which by his virtue were with laurels drest.
As souls reach heaven while yet in bodies pent,
So did he live above his banishment.
That sun, which we beheld with cozen'd eyes
Within the water, mov'd along the skies.
How easy 'tis, when destiny proves kind,
With full-spread sails to run before the wind!
But those that 'gainst stiff gales laveering go,
Must be at once resolv'd and skilful too.
He would not, like soft Otho, hope prevent,
But stay'd and suffer'd fortune to repent.
These virtues Galba in a stranger sought,
And Piso to adopted empire brought.
How shall I then my doubtful thoughts express,
That must his sufferings both regret and bless?
For when his early valour Heaven had crost;
And all at Worcester but the honour lost;
Forc'd into exile from his rightful throne,
He made all countries where he came his own;
And viewing monarchs' secret arts of sway,
A royal factor for his kingdoms lay.
Thus banish'd David spent abroad his time,
When to be God's anointed was his crime;
And when restor'd, made his proud neighbours rue
Those choice remarks he from his travels drew.
Nor is he only by afflictions shown
To conquer others realms, but rule his own:
Recovering hardly what he lost before,
His right endears it much; his purchase more.
Inur'd to suffer ere he came to reign,

No rash procedure will his actions stain:
To business ripen'd by digestive thought,
His future rule is into method brought:
As they who first proportion understand,
With easy practice reach a master's hand.
Well might the ancient poets then confer
On Night the honour'd name of Counsellor,
Since struck with rays of prosperous fortune blind,
We light alone in dark afflictions find.
In such adversities to sceptres train'd,
The name of Great his famous grandsire gain'd;
Who yet a king alone in name and right,
With hunger, cold, and angry Jove did fight;
Shock'd by a Covenanting League's vast powers,
As holy and as catholic as ours:
Till fortune's fruitless spite had made it known,
Her blows not shook but riveted his throne.
Some lazy ages, lost in sleep and ease,
No action leave to busy chronicles:
Such, whose supine felicity but makes
In story chasms, in epochas mistakes;
O'er whom Time gently shakes his wings of down,
Till with his silent sickle they are mown.
Such is not Charles his too too active age,

111 *Charles his too too active age*] Original edition. Derrick prints, 'Such is not *Charles*' too too active age.'

See also before, ver. 49. *Too too* active age, was an ancient formulary. So in H. Parrot's *Springes for Woodcocks*, 12mo. Lond. 1613, Epigram 133, Lib. 1.

——— 'tis knowne her iesting's *too too* evill.'

And even in prose, as in Penri's *Exhortation vnto the*

Which, govern'd by the wild distemper'd rage
Of some black star infecting all the skies,
Made him at his own cost like Adam wise.
Tremble, ye nations, who secure before
Laugh'd at those arms that 'gainst ourselves we bore;
Rous'd by the lash of his own stubborn tail,
Our lion now will foreign foes assail.
With alga who the sacred altar strews?
To all the sea-gods Charles an offering owes:
A bull to thee, Portunus, shall be slain,
A lamb to you, ye tempests of the main:
For those loud storms that did against him roar
Have cast his shipwreck'd vessel on the shore.
Yet as wise artists mix their colours so,
That by degrees they from each other go:
Black steals unheeded from the neighb'ring white.
Without offending the well-cozen'd sight:
So on us stole our blessed change; while we
The effect did feel, but scarce the manner see.
Frosts that constrain the ground, and birth deny
To flowers that in its womb expecting lie,

Gouernours, &c. of Wales, 1588, p. 51. 'The case is *too too* manifest.' *Too too* for *exceeding* is also used in the Lancashire dialect. I venture to add part of P. Fletcher's well-drawn character of Lasciviousness personified, *Purp. Isl.* edit. 1633, p. 90.

'Broad were his jests, wilde his uncivil sport;
His fashion *too too* fond, and loosly light:
A long love-lock on his left shoulder plight,
Like to a woman's hair, well shew'd a woman's sprite.' *T.*

Do seldom their usurping power withdraw,
But raging floods pursue their hasty thaw.
Our thaw was mild, the cold not chas'd away,
But lost in kindly heat of lengthen'd day.
Heaven would no bargain for its blessings drive,
But what we could not pay for, freely give.
The Prince of peace would like himself confer
A gift unhop'd, without the price of war:
Yet, as he knew his blessing's worth, took care,
That we should know it by repeated prayer;
Which storm'd the skies, and ravish'd Charles from thence,
As heaven itself is took by violence.
Booth's forward valour only serv'd to show
He durst that duty pay we all did owe:
The attempt was fair; but heaven's prefixed hour
Not come: so like the watchful traveller
That by the moon's mistaken light did rise,
Lay down again, and clos'd his weary eyes.
'Twas Monk, whom Providence design'd to loose
Those real bonds false freedom did impose.

[145] *Booth's forward valour*, &c.] In 1659, Sir George Booth assembled a considerable body of men for the king's service in Cheshire, and possessed himself of Chester, Chick-castle, and several other places, being joined by the Earl of Derby, Lord Kilmurray, Sir Thomas Middleton, Major-general Egerton, with other loyal gentlemen, who encountering with Lambert, general of the parliament's forces, were entirely routed at Winnington-bridge, near Northwich, in Cheshire, and most of the principal people made prisoners. *D.*

The blessed saints that watch'd this turning scene,
Did from their stars with joyful wonder lean,
To see small clues draw vastest weights along,
Not in their bulk but in their order strong.
Thus pencils can by one slight touch restore
Smiles to that changed face that wept before.
With ease such fond chimæras we pursue,
As fancy frames for fancy to subdue:
But when ourselves to action we betake,
It shuns the mint like gold that chymists make.
How hard was then his task! at once to be
What in the body natural we see!
Man's architect distinctly did ordain
The charge of muscles, nerves, and of the brain,
Through viewless conduits spirits to dispense;
The springs of motion from the seat of sense.
'Twas not the hasty product of a day,
But the well-ripen'd fruit of wise delay.
He, like a patient angler, ere he strook,
Would let him play awhile upon the hook.
Our healthful food the stomach labours thus,
At first embracing what it straight doth crush.
Wise leeches will not vain receipts obtrude,
While growing pains pronounce the humours crude:
Deaf to complaints they wait upon the ill,
Till some safe crisis authorise their skill.
Nor could his acts too close a vizard wear,
To 'scape their eyes whom guilt had taught to fear,
And guard with caution that polluted nest,
Whence Legion twice before was dispossest:

Once sacred house; which when they enter'd in,
They thought the place could sanctify a sin;
Like those that vainly hop'd kind heaven would wink,
While to excess on martyrs' tombs they drink.
And as devouter Turks first warn their souls
To part, before they taste forbidden bowls:
So these, when their black crimes they went about,
First timely charm'd their useless conscience out.
Religion's name against itself was made;
The shadow serv'd the substance to invade:
Like zealous missions, they did care pretend
Of souls in show, but made the gold their end.
Th' incensed powers beheld with scorn from high
A heaven so far distant from the sky, [ground,
Which durst, with horses' hoofs that beat the
And martial brass, bely the thunder's sound.
'Twas hence at length just vengeance thought it fit
To speed their ruin by their impious wit.
Thus Sforza, curs'd with a too fertile brain,
Lost by his wiles the power his wit did gain.
Henceforth their fougue must spend at lesser rate,
Than in its flames to wrap a nation's fate.
Suffer'd to live, they are like Helots set,
A virtuous shame within us to beget.
For by example most we sinn'd before,
And glass-like clearness mix'd with frailty bore.
But since reform'd by what we did amiss,
We by our suff'rings learn to prize our bliss:
Like early lovers, whose unpractis'd hearts

Were long the may-game of malicious arts,
When once they find their jealousies were vain,
With double heat renew their fires again.
'Twas this produc'd the joy that hurried o'er
Such swarms of English to the neighb'ring shore,
To fetch that prize, by which Batavia made
So rich amends for our impoverish'd trade.
Oh had you seen from Schevelin's barren shore,
(Crowded with troops, and barren now no more.)
Afflicted Holland to his farewell bring
True sorrow, Holland to regret a king!
While waiting him his royal fleet did ride,
And willing winds to their lower'd sails denied.
The wav'ring streamers, flags, and standard out,
The merry seamen's rude but cheerful shout;
And last, the cannons' voice that shook the skies,
And, as it fares in sudden ecstasies,
At once bereft us both of ears and eyes.
The Naseby, now no longer England's shame,
But better to be lost in Charles his name,
(Like some unequal bride in nobler sheets)
Receives her lord: the joyful London meets
The princely York, himself alone a freight;
The Swift-sure groans beneath great Gloster's weight:
Secure as when the halcyon breeds, with these
He that was born to drown might cross the seas.
Heaven could not own a Providence, and take
The wealth three nations ventur'd at a stake.
The same indulgence Charles his voyage bless'd,

Which in his right had miracles confess'd.
The winds that never moderation knew,
Afraid to blow too much, too faintly blew:
Or out of breath with joy, could not enlarge
Their straighten'd lungs, or conscious of their charge.
The British Amphitrite, smooth and clear,
In richer azure never did appear;
Proud her returning Prince to entertain
With the submitted fasces of the main.

And welcome now, great monarch, to your own;
Behold th' approaching cliffs of Albion:
It is no longer motion cheats your view,
As you meet it, the land approacheth you.
The land returns, and, in the white it wears,
The marks of penitence and sorrow bears.
But you, whose goodness your descent doth show,
Your heavenly parentage and earthly too;
By that same mildness, which your father's crown
Before did ravish, shall secure your own.
Not tied to rules of policy, you find
Revenge less sweet than a forgiving mind.
Thus, when the Almighty would to Moses give
A sight of all he could behold and live;
A voice before his entry did proclaim
Long-suffering, goodness, mercy, in his name.
Your power to justice doth submit your cause,
Your goodness only is above the laws;
Whose rigid letter, while pronounc'd by you,

Is softer made. So winds that tempests brew,
When through Arabian groves they take their flight,
Made wanton with rich odours, lose their spite.
And as those lees that trouble it, refine
The agitated soul of generous wine:
So tears of joy, for your returning, spilt,
Work out, and expiate our former guilt.
Methinks I see those crowds on Dover's strand,
Who, in their haste to welcome you to land,
Chok'd up the beach with their still growing store,
And made a wilder torrent on the shore:
While, spurr'd with eager thoughts of past delight,
Those, who had seen you, court a second sight;
Preventing still your steps, and making haste
To meet you often, wheresoe'er you past.
How shall I speak of that triumphant day,
When you renew'd th' expiring pomp of May!
(A month that owns an interest in your name:
You and the flowers are its peculiar claim.)
That star that at your birth shone out so bright,
It stain'd the duller sun's meridian light,
Did once again its potent fires renew,
Guiding our eyes to find and worship you.
And now Time's whiter series is begun,
Which in soft centuries shall smoothly run:
Those clouds, that overcast your morn, shall fly,
Dispell'd to farthest corners of the sky.
Our nation with united interest blest,
Not now content to poise, shall sway the rest.
Abroad your empire shall no limits know,

But, like the sea, in boundless circles flow.
Your much-lov'd fleet shall, with a wide command,
Besiege the petty monarchs of the land:
And as old Time his offspring swallow'd down,
Our ocean in its depths all seas shall drown.
Their wealthy trade from pirates' rapine free,
Our merchants shall no more adventurers be:
Nor in the farthest east those dangers fear,
Which humble Holland must dissemble here.
Spain to your gift alone her Indies owes;
For what the powerful takes not he bestows:
And France, that did an exile's presence fear,
May justly apprehend you still too near.
At home the hateful names of parties cease,
And factious souls are wearied into peace.
The discontented now are only they,
Whose crimes before did your just cause betray:
Of those your edicts some reclaim from sins,
But most your life and blest example wins.
Oh happy prince, whom heaven hath taught the way
By paying vows to have more vows to pay!
Oh happy age! Oh times like those alone,
By fate reserv'd for great Augustus' throne!
When the joint growth of arms and art foreshow
The world a monarch, and that monarch you.

TO HIS SACRED MAJESTY.

A PANEGYRIC ON HIS CORONATION.

In that wild deluge where the world was drown'd,
When life and sin one common tomb had found,
The first small prospect of a rising hill
With various notes of joy the ark did fill:
Yet when that flood in its own depths was drown'd,
It left behind it false and slippery ground;
And the more solemn pomp was still deferr'd,
Till new-born nature in fresh looks appear'd.
Thus, royal sir, to see you landed here,
Was cause enough of triumph for a year:
Nor would your care those glorious joys repeat,
Till they at once might be secure and great:
Till your kind beams, by their continu'd stay,
Had warm'd the ground, and call'd the damps away.
Such vapours, while your powerful influence dries,
Then soonest vanish when they highest rise.
Had greater haste these sacred rites prepar'd,
Some guilty months had in your triumphs shar'd:
But this untainted year is all your own;
Your glories may without our crimes be shown.
We had not yet exhausted all our store,
When you refresh'd our joys by adding more:
As heaven, of old, dispens'd celestial dew,
You gave us manna, and still give us new.
Now our sad ruins are remov'd from sight,

The season too comes fraught with new delight:
Time seems not now beneath his years to stoop,
Nor do his wings with sickly feathers droop:
Soft western winds waft o'er the gaudy spring,
And open'd scenes of flowers and blossoms bring,
To grace this happy day, while you appear,
Not king of us alone, but of the year.
All eyes you draw, and with the eyes the heart:
Of your own pomp yourself the greatest part:
Loud shouts the nation's happiness proclaim,
And heaven this day is feasted with your name.
Your cavalcade the fair spectators view
From their high standings, yet look up to you.
From your brave train each singles out a prey,
And longs to date a conquest from your day.
Now charg'd with blessings while you seek repose,
Officious slumbers haste your eyes to close:
And glorious dreams stand ready to restore
The pleasing shapes of all you saw before.
Next to the sacred temple you are led,
Where waits a crown for your more sacred head:
How justly from the church that crown is due,
Preserv'd from ruin, and restor'd by you!
The grateful choir their harmony employ,
Not to make greater, but more solemn joy.
Wrapt soft and warm your name is sent on high,
As flames do on the wings of incense fly:
Music herself is lost, in vain she brings
Her choicest notes to praise the best of kings:
Her melting strains in you a tomb have found,

And lie like bees in their own sweetness drown'd.
He that brought peace, all discord could atone,
His name is music of itself alone.
Now while the sacred oil anoints your head,
And fragrant scents, begun from you, are spread
Through the large dome; the people's joyful sound,
Sent back, is still preserv'd in hallow'd ground;
Which in one blessing mix'd descends on you;
As heighten'd spirits fall in richer dew.
Not that our wishes do increase your store,
Full of your self you can admit no more;
We add not to your glory, but employ
Our time, like angels, in expressing joy.
Nor is it duty, or our hopes alone,
Create that joy, but full fruition:
We know those blessings, which we must possess,
And judge of future by past happiness.
No promise can oblige a prince so much
Still to be good, as long to have been such.
A noble emulation heats your breast,
And your own fame now robs you of your rest.
Good actions still must be maintain'd with good,
As bodies nourish'd with resembling food.
You have already quench'd sedition's brand;
And zeal, which burnt it, only warms the land.
The jealous sects, that dare not trust their cause,
So far from their own will as to the laws,
You for their umpire and their synod take,
And their appeal alone to Cæsar make.
Kind heaven so rare a temper did provide,

That guilt repenting might in it confide.
Among our crimes oblivion may be set;
But 'tis our king's perfection to forget.
Virtues unknown to these rough northern climes
From milder heavens you bring without their crimes,
Your calmness does no after-storms provide,
Nor seeming patience mortal anger hide.
When empire first from families did spring,
Then every father govern'd as a king:
But you, that are a sovereign prince, allay
Imperial power with your paternal sway.
From those great cares when ease your soul unbends,
Your pleasures are design'd to noble ends:
Born to command the mistress of the seas,
Your thoughts themselves in that blue empire please.
Hither in summer evenings you repair
To taste the fraicheur of the purer air:
Undaunted here you ride, when winter raves,
With Cæsar's heart that rose above the waves.
More I could sing, but fear my numbers stays;
No loyal subject dares that courage praise.
In stately frigates most delight you find,
Where well-drawn battles fire your martial mind.
What to your cares we owe, is learnt from hence,
When even your pleasures serve for our defence.
Beyond your court flows in th' admitted tide,
Where in new depths the wondering fishes glide:
Here in a royal bed the waters sleep;
When tir'd at sea, within this bay they creep.

Here the mistrustful fowl no harm suspects,
So safe are all things which our king protects.
From your lov'd Thames a blessing yet is due,
Second alone to that it brought in you;
A queen, near whose chaste womb, ordain'd by fate,
The souls of kings unborn for bodies wait.
It was your love before made discord cease:
Your love is destin'd to your country's peace.
Both Indies, rivals in your bed, provide
With gold or jewels to adorn your bride.
This to a mighty king presents rich ore,
While that with incense does a god implore.
Two kingdoms wait your doom, and, as you choose,
This must receive a crown, or that must lose.
Thus from your royal oak, like Jove's of old,
Are answers sought, and destinies foretold:
Propitious oracles are begg'd with vows,
And crowns that grow upon the sacred boughs.
Your subjects, while you weigh the nation's fate,
Suspend to both their doubtful love or hate:
Choose only, sir, that so they may possess,
With their own peace their children's happiness.

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR HYDE,*

PRESENTED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1662.

MY LORD,

WHILE flattering crowds officiously appear,
To give themselves, not you, a happy year;
And by the greatness of their presents prove
How much they hope, but not how well they love;
The Muses, who your early courtship boast,
Though now your flames are with their beauty lost,
Yet watch their time, that, if you have forgot
They were your mistresses, the world may not:
Decay'd by time and wars, they only prove

* Edward, Earl of Clarendon, to whom this poem is addressed, having followed the fortune of the king, was appointed secretary of state at Bruges, and constituted lord high chancellor of England on the demise of Sir Richard Lane. He was confirmed in this last post at the Restoration, when he was also chosen chancellor of the university of Oxford, in the room of the Duke of Somerset, and created Baron Hindon, Viscount Cornbury, and Earl of Clarendon.

He was too honest for a court; his plain dealing and integrity ruined him; the king, abandoned to pleasure, was impatient of admonition, and Hyde was not sparing of it. this paved the way for his disgrace. He was prosecuted with great acrimony by the Earl of Bristol, who impeached him in the House of Peers. Finding his party too weak to support him, he retired to Rouen, where he died in 1674. He is said to have been concerned in selling Dunkirk to the French. He was an able lawyer, a great statesman, and an elegant writer. *D.*

Their former beauty by your former love;
And now present, as ancient ladies do,
That courted long, at length are forc'd to woo.
For still they look on you with such kind eyes,
As those that see the Church's sovereign rise;
From their own order chose, in whose high state
They think themselves the second choice of fate.
When our great monarch into exile went,
Wit and religion suffer'd banishment.
Thus once, when Troy was wrapp'd in fire and smoke,
The helpless gods their burning shrines forsook;
They with the vanquish'd prince and party go,
And leave their temples empty to the foe.
At length the Muses stand, restor'd again
To that great charge which nature did ordain;
And their lov'd Druids seem reviv'd by fate,
While you dispense the laws, and guide the state.
The nation's soul, our monarch, does dispense,
Through you, to us his vital influence;
You are the channel, where those spirits flow,
And work them higher, as to us they go.

In open prospect nothing bounds our eye,
Until the earth seems join'd unto the sky:
So in this hemisphere our utmost view
Is only bounded by our king and you:
Our sight is limited where you are join'd,
And beyond that no farther heaven can find.
So well your virtues do with his agree,
That, though your orbs of different greatness be,
Yet both are for each other's use dispos'd,

His to inclose, and yours to be inclos'd.
Nor could another in your room have been,
Except an emptiness had come between.
Well may he then to you his cares impart,
And share his burden where he shares his heart.
In you his sleep still wakes; his pleasures find
Their share of business in your laboring mind.
So when the weary sun his place resigns,
He leaves his light, and by reflection shines.
Justice, that sits and frowns where public laws
Exclude soft mercy from a private cause,
In your tribunal most herself does please;
There only smiles because she lives at ease;
And, like young David, finds her strength the more,
When disencumber'd from those arms she wore.
Heaven would our royal master should exceed
Most in that virtue, which we most did need;
And his mild father (who too late did find
All mercy vain but what with power was join'd)
His fatal goodness left to fitter times,
Not to increase, but to absolve our crimes:
But when the heir of this vast treasure knew
How large a legacy was left to you,
(Too great for any subject to retain)
He wisely tied it to the crown again:
Yet, passing through your hands, it gathers more,
As streams, through mines, bear tincture of their ore.
While empiric politicians use deceit,
Hide what they give, and cure but by a cheat;

You boldly show that skill which they pretend,
And work by means as noble as your end;
Which should you veil, we might unwind the clue,
As men do nature, till we came to you.
And as the Indies were not found, before
Those rich perfumes, which, from the happy shore,
The winds upon their balmy wings convey'd,
Whose guilty sweetness first their world betray'd;
So by your counsels we are brought to view
A rich and undiscover'd world in you.
By you our monarch does that fame assure,
Which kings must have, or cannot live secure:
For prosp'rous princes gain their subjects' heart,
Who love that praise in which themselves have [part.
By you he fits those subjects to obey,
As heaven's eternal monarch does convey
His power unseen, and man, to his designs
By his bright ministers the stars, inclines.
  Our setting sun from his declining seat
Shot beams of kindness on you, not of heat:
And, when his love was bounded in a few,
That were unhappy that they might be true,
Made you the favourite of his last sad times,
That is a suff'rer in his subjects' crimes:
Thus those first favours you received were sent,
Like heaven's rewards in earthly punishment.
Yet fortune, conscious of your destiny,
E'en then took care to lay you softly by;

87 *Our setting sun*] Charles I. employed him in writing some of his declarations. *Dr. J. W.*

And wrapp'd your fate among her precious things,
Kept fresh to be unfolded with your king's.
Shown all at once you dazzled so our eyes,
As new-born Pallas did the gods surprise;
When, springing forth from Jove's new-closing wound,
She struck the warlike spear into the ground:
Which sprouting leaves did suddenly inclose,
And peaceful olives shaded as they rose.
How strangely active are the arts of peace,
Whose restless motions less than war's do cease!
Peace is not freed from labour but from noise;
And war more force, but not more pains employs:
Such is the mighty swiftness of your mind,
That, like the earth, it leaves our sense behind,
While you so smoothly turn and roll our sphere,
That rapid motion does but rest appear.
For, as in nature's swiftness, with the throng
Of flying orbs while ours is borne along.
All seems at rest to the deluded eye,
Mov'd by the soul of the same harmony,
So, carried on by your unwearied care,
We rest in peace, and yet in motion share.
Let envy then those crimes within you see,
From which the happy never must be free;
Envy, that does with misery reside,
The joy and the revenge of ruin'd pride.
Think it not hard, if at so cheap a rate
You can secure the constancy of fate,
Whose kindness sent what does their malice seem,

By lesser ills the greater to redeem.
Nor can we this weak shower a tempest call,
But drops of heat, that in the sunshine fall.
You have already wearied fortune so,
She cannot farther be your friend or foe;
But sits all breathless, and admires to feel
A fate so weighty, that it stops her wheel.
In all things else above our humble fate,
Your equal mind yet swells not into state,
But, like some mountain in those happy isles,
Where in perpetual spring young nature smiles,
Your greatness shows: no horror to affright,
But trees for shade, and flowers to court the sight:
Sometimes the hill submits itself a while
In small descents, which do its height beguile;
And sometimes mounts, but so as billows play,
Whose rise not hinders but makes short our way.
Your brow, which does no fear of thunder know,
Sees rolling tempests vainly beat below;
And, like Olympus' top, th' impression wears
Of love and friendship writ in former years.
Yet, unimpair'd with labours, or with time,
Your age but seems to a new youth to climb.
Thus heavenly bodies do our time beget,

139 *Sometimes the hill submits itself a while*
In small descents]
'———— quà se subducere colles
Incipiunt, mollique jugum demittere clivo.'
Virgil, Ecl. ix. 8. *J. W.*

149 *Thus heavenly*] Dr. Johnson is of opinion, that 'in this poem he seems to have collected all his powers.' I should

And measure change, but share no part of it.
And still it shall without a weight increase,
Like this new-year, whose motions never cease.
For since the glorious course you have begun
Is led by Charles, as that is by the sun,
It must both weightless and immortal prove,
Because the centre of it is above.

SATIRE ON THE DUTCH.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1662.*

As needy gallants, in the scrivener's hands,
Court the rich knaves that gripe their mortgag'd lands;
The first fat buck of all the season's sent,
And keeper takes no fee in compliment;
The dotage of some Englishmen is such,
To fawn on those, who ruin them, the Dutch.
They shall have all, rather than make a war
With those, who of the same religion are.
The Straits, the Guiney-trade, the herrings too;
Nay, to keep friendship, they shall pickle you.

lament if this were true. But then he adds, 'He has concluded with lines of which I think not myself obliged to tell the meaning.' *Dr. J. W.*

* This poem is no more than a prologue a little altered, prefixed to our author's tragedy of Amboyna. *D.*

Some are resolved not to find out the cheat,
But, cuckold-like, love them that do the feat.
What injuries soe'er upon us fall,
Yet still the same religion answers all.
Religion wheedled us to civil war, [spare.
Drew English blood, and Dutchmen's now would
Be gull'd no longer; for you'll find it true,
They have no more religion, faith! than you.
Interest's the god they worship in their state,
And we, I take it, have not much of that.
Well monarchies may own religion's name,
But states are atheists in their very frame.
They share a sin; and such proportions fall,
That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.
Think on their rapine, falsehood, cruelty,
And that what once they were, they still would be.
To one well-born th' affront is worse and more,
When he's abus'd and baffled by a boor.
With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do;
They've both ill nature and ill manners too.
Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation;
For they were bred ere manners were in fashion:
And their new commonwealth has set them free
Only from honour and civility.
Venetians do not more uncouthly ride,
Than did their lubber state mankind bestride.
Their sway became 'em with as ill a mien,
As their own paunches swell above their chin.
Yet is their empire no true growth but humour,
And only two kings' touch can cure the tumour.

As Cato, fruits of Afric did display; [41]
Let us before our eyes their Indies lay:
All loyal English will like him conclude;
Let Cæsar live, and Carthage be subdu'd.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS,*

ON THE MEMORABLE VICTORY GAINED BY THE DUKE OVER THE HOLLANDERS, JUNE 3, 1665, AND ON HER JOURNEY AFTERWARDS INTO THE NORTH.

MADAM,

When for our sakes your hero you resign'd
To swelling seas, and every faithless wind;
When you releas'd his courage, and set free
A valour fatal to the enemy;
You lodg'd your country's cares within your breast,
(The mansion where soft love should only rest:)

[41] *As Cato*, &c.] Compare the *Annus Mirabilis*, stan. 173.

"As once old Cato in the Roman fight,
The tempting fruits of Afric did unfold." *T.*

[44] *and Carthage*] The very words and allusion by Lord Shaftesbury, in his famous speech against the Dutch.

* The lady to whom our author addresses this poem was daughter to the great Earl of Clarendon. The Duke of York had been some time married to her, before the affair was known either to the king his brother, or to her father. She died in March, 1671, leaving issue one son, named Edgar,

And, ere our foes abroad were overcome,
The noblest conquest you had gain'd at home.
Ah, what concerns did both your souls divide!
Your honour gave us what your love denied:
And 'twas for him much easier to subdue
Those foes he fought with, than to part from you.
That glorious day, which two such navies saw,
As each unmatch'd might to the world give law.
Neptune, yet doubtful whom he should obey,
Held to them both the trident of the sea:
The winds were hush'd, the waves in ranks were cast,
As awfully as when God's people past:
Those, yet uncertain on whose sails to blow,
These, where the wealth of nations ought to flow.
Then with the duke your highness rul'd the day:
While all the brave did his command obey,
The fair and pious under you did pray.
How powerful are chaste vows! the wind and tide
You brib'd to combat on the English side.
Thus to your much-lov'd lord you did convey

and three daughters, Katherine, Mary, and Ann. The two latter lived to sit on the British throne; the two former survived their mother but a short time. Bishop Burnet tells us, that she was a woman of knowledge and penetration, friendly and generous, but severe in her resentments. *D.*

[26] *your much-lov'd lord*] James, notwithstanding, had many mistresses. Lady Dorchester, says Lord Orford, Vol. IV. p. 319, 4to. said wittily, she wondered for what James II. chose his mistresses. We are none of us handsome, and if we had wit, he has not enough to discover it. And once meeting the Duchess of Portsmouth and Lady

An unknown succour, sent the nearest way.
New vigour to his wearied arms you brought,
(So Moses was upheld while Israel fought)
While, from afar, we heard the cannon play,
Like distant thunder on a shiny day.
For absent friends we were asham'd to fear,
When we consider'd what you ventur'd there.
Ships, men, and arms, our country might restore,
But such a leader could supply no more.
With generous thoughts of conquest he did burn,
Yet fought not more to vanquish than return.
Fortune and victory he did pursue,
To bring them as his slaves to wait on you.
Thus beauty ravish'd the rewards of fame,
And the fair triumph'd when the brave o'ercame.
Then, as you meant to spread another way,
By land your conquests, far as his by sea,
Leaving our southern clime, you march'd along
The stubborn North, ten thousand Cupids strong.
Like commons the nobility resort,
In crowding heaps, to fill your moving court:
To welcome your approach the vulgar run,
Like some new envoy from the distant sun,
And country beauties by their lovers go,
Blessing themselves, and wondering at the show.
So when the new-born Phœnix first is seen,

Orkney, the favourite of King William, at the drawing-room of George I. she exclaimed, "Good God! who would have thought that we three should have met together here!'

Dr. J. W.

Her feather'd subjects all adore their queen,
And while she makes her progress through the East,
From every grove her numerous train's increast:
Each poet of the air her glory sings, [wings.
And round him the pleas'd audience clap their

[56] *her glory sings*] The Duchess of York, says Burnet, was an extraordinary woman. She had great knowledge, and a lively sense of things, but took state on her rather too much. She wrote well, and had begun the duke's life, of which she showed me a volume. She was bred to great strictness in religion, practised secret confession, and Morley was her confessor. *Dr. J. W.*

ANNUS MIRABILIS;

THE YEAR OF WONDERS, 1666.

AN HISTORICAL POEM.

TO THE

METROPOLIS OF GREAT BRITAIN,

THE MOST RENOWNED AND LATE FLOURISHING CITY OF LONDON, IN ITS REPRESENTATIVES THE LORD MAYOR AND COURT OF ALDERMEN, THE SHERIFFS, AND COMMON COUNCIL OF IT.*

As perhaps I am the first who ever presented a work of this nature to the metropolis of any nation; so it is likewise consonant to justice, that he who was to give the first example of such a dedication should begin it with that city, which has set a pattern to all others of true loyalty, invincible courage, and unshaken constancy. Other cities have been praised for the same virtues, but I am much deceived if any have so dearly purchased their reputation; their fame has been won them by cheaper trials than an expensive, though necessary war, a consuming pestilence, and a more consuming fire. To submit yourselves with that humility to the judgments of Heaven, and at the same time to raise yourselves with that vigour above all human enemies; to be combated at once from above and from below, to be struck

* This dedication has been left out in all editions of the poem but the first. To me there appears in it an honest unfeigned warmth and a love for the king, which compensates for any thing that may have dropped from our author's pen in his verses on Cromwell's death; however, we submit this opinion under correction to the judicious reader. *D.*

down and to triumph: I know not whether such trials have been ever paralleled in any nation: the resolution and successes of them never can be. Never had prince or people more mutual reason to love each other, if suffering for each other can endear affection. You have come together a pair of matchless lovers, through many difficulties; he, through a long exile, various traverses of fortune, and the interposition of many rivals, who violently ravished and withheld you from him: and certainly you have had your share in sufferings. But Providence has cast upon you want of trade, that you might appear bountiful to your country's necessities; and the rest of your afflictions are not more the effects of God's displeasure (frequent examples of them having been in the reign of the most excellent princes) than occasions for the manifesting of your Christian and civil virtues. To you therefore this Year of Wonders is justly dedicated, because you have made it so. You, who are to stand a wonder to all years and ages, and who have built yourselves an immortal monument on your own ruins. You are now a phœnix in her ashes, and, as far as humanity can approach, a great emblem of the suffering Deity: but Heaven never made so much piety and virtue to leave it miserable. I have heard, indeed, of some virtuous persons who have ended unfortunately, but never of any virtuous nation: Providence is engaged too deeply, when the cause becomes so general; and I cannot imagine it has resolved the ruin of that people at home, which it has blessed abroad with such successes. I am therefore to conclude, that your sufferings are at an end; and that one part of my poem has not been more a history of your destruction, than the other a prophecy of your restoration. The accomplishment of which happiness, as it is the wish of all true Englishmen, so is it by none more passionately desired than by,

The greatest of your admirers,
And most humble of your servants,
JOHN DRYDEN.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ENSUING POEM,

IN A LETTER

TO THE HON. SIR ROBERT HOWARD.

SIR,

I AM so many ways obliged to you, and so little able to return your favours, that, like those who owe too much, I can only live by getting farther into your debt. You have not only been careful of my fortune, which was the effect of your nobleness, but you have been solicitous of my reputation, which is that of your kindness. It is not long since I gave you the trouble of perusing a play for me, and now, instead of an acknowledgment, I have given you a greater, in the correction of a poem. But since you are to bear this persecution, I will at least give you the encouragement of a martyr; you could never suffer in a nobler cause. For I have chosen the most heroic subject which any poet could desire: I have taken upon me to describe the motives, the beginning, progress, and successes, of a most just and necessary war: in it, the care, management, and prudence of our king; the conduct and valour of a royal admiral, and of two incomparable generals; the invincible courage of our captains and seamen; and three glorious victories, the result of all. After this, I have, in the fire, the most deplorable, but withal the greatest, argument that can be imagined: the destruction being so swift, so sudden, so vast, and miserable, as nothing can parallel in story. The former part of this poem, relating to the war, is but a due expiation for my not serving my king and country in it. All gentlemen are almost obliged to it; and I know no reason we should give that advantage to the commonalty of England, to be foremost in brave actions, which the noblesse of France would never suffer in their peasants. I should not have written this but to a person who has been ever forward to appear in all employments, whither his honour and generosity have called him. The latter part of my poem, which describes the fire, I owe, first to the piety and

fatherly affection of our monarch to his suffering subjects; and, in the second place, to the courage, loyalty, and magnanimity of the city; both which were so conspicuous, that I have wanted words to celebrate them as they deserve. I have called my poem Historical, not Epic, though both the actions and actors are as much heroic as any poem can contain. But since the action is not properly one, nor that accomplished in the last successes, I have judged it too bold a title for a few stanzas, which are little more in number than a single Iliad, or the longest of the Æneids. For this reason (I mean not of length, but broken action, tied too severely to the laws of history) I am apt to agree with those, who rank Lucan, rather among historians in verse, than Epic poets: in whose room, if I am not deceived, Silius Italicus, though a worse writer, may more justly be admitted. *I have chosen to write my poem in quatrains, or stanzas of four in alternate rhyme, because I have ever judged them more noble, and of greater dignity, both for the sound and number, than any other verse in use amongst us; in which I am sure I have your approbation. The learned languages have certainly a great advantage of us, in not being tied to the slavery of any rhyme; and were less constrained in the quantity of every syllable, which they might vary with spondees or dactyls, besides so many other helps of grammatical figures, for the lengthening or abbreviation of them, than the modern are in the close of that one syllable, which often confines, and more often corrupts, the sense of all the rest. But in this necessity of our rhymes, I have always found the couplet verse most easy, though not so proper for this occasion: for there the work is sooner at an end, every two lines concluding the labour of the poet; but in quatrains he is to carry it farther on, and not only so, but to bear along in his head the troublesome sense of four lines together. For those who write correctly in this kind, must needs acknowledge, that the last line of the stanza is to be considered in the composition of the first. Neither can we give ourselves the liberty of making any part of a verse for the sake of rhyme, or concluding with a word which is

* Dryden certainly soon changed his opinion, since he never after practised the manner of versification he has here praised: but we shall find it always his way to assure us, that his present mode of writing is best. Conscious of his own importance, he soared above control; and when he composed a poem, he set it up as a standard of imitation, deducing from it rules of criticism, the practice of which he endeavoured to enforce, till either through interest or fancy he was induced to change his opinion. *D.*

not current English, or using the variety of female rhymes; all which our fathers practised: and for the female rhymes, they are still in use amongst other nations; with the Italian in every line, with the Spaniard promiscuously, with the French alternately; as those who have read the Alarique, the Pucelle, or any of their later poems, will agree with me. And besides this, they write in Alexandrines, or verses of six feet; such as amongst us is the old translation of Homer, by Chapman: all which, by lengthening of their chain, makes the sphere of their activity the larger. I have dwelt too long upon the choice of my stanza, which you may remember is much better defended in the preface to Gondibert; and therefore I will hasten to acquaint you with my endeavours in the writing. In general I will only say, I have never yet seen the description of any naval fight in the proper terms which are used at sea; and if there be any such, in another language, as that of Lucan in the third of his Pharsalia, yet I could not avail myself of it in the English; the terms of art in every tongue bearing more of the idiom of it than any other words. We hear indeed among our poets, of the thundering of guns, the smoke, the disorder, and the slaughter; but all these are common notions. And certainly, as those who, in a logical dispute, keep in general terms, would hide a fallacy, so those who do it in any poetical description, would veil their ignorance.

> Descriptas servare vices operumque colores,
> Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, Poeta salutor?

For my own part, if I had little knowledge of the sea, yet I have thought it no shame to learn; and if I have made some few mistakes, it is only, as you can bear me witness, because I have wanted opportunity to correct them; the whole poem being first written, and now sent you from a place where I have not so much as the converse of any seaman. Yet though the trouble I had in writing it was great, it was more than recompensed by the pleasure. I found myself so warm in celebrating the praises of military men, two such especially as the Prince and General, that it is no wonder if they inspired me with thoughts above my ordinary level. And I am well satisfied that, as they are incomparably the best subject I ever had, excepting only the Royal Family, so also, that this I have written of them is much better than what I have performed on any other. I have been forced to help out other arguments; but this has been bountiful to me: they have been low and barren of praise, and I have

exalted them, and made them fruitful; but here—*Omnia sponte suâ reddit justissima tellus.* I have had a large, a fair, and a pleasant field; so fertile that without my cultivating, it has given me two harvests in a summer, and in both oppressed the reaper. All other greatness in subjects is only counterfeit; it will not endure the test of danger; the greatness of arms is only real; other greatness burdens a nation with its weight; this supports it with its strength. And as it is the happiness of the age, so it is the peculiar goodness of the best of kings, that we may praise his subjects without offending him. Doubtless it proceeds from a just confidence of his own virtue, which the lustre of no other can be so great as to darken in him; for the good or the valiant are never safely praised under a bad or a degenerate prince. But to return from this digression to a farther account of my poem; I must crave leave to tell you, that as I have endeavoured to adorn it with noble thoughts, so much more to express those thoughts with elocution. The composition of all poems is, or ought to be, of wit; and wit in the poet, or wit-writing (if you will give me leave to use a school-distinction) is no other than the faculty of imagination in the writer, which, like a nimble spaniel, beats over and ranges through the field of memory, till it springs the quarry it hunted after; or, without metaphor, which searches over all the memory for the species or ideas of those things which it designs to represent. Wit written is that which is well defined, the happy result of thought, or product of imagination. But to proceed from wit, in the general notion of it, to the proper wit of an heroic or historical poem, I judge it chiefly to consist in the delightful imaging of persons, actions, passions, or things. It is not the jerk or sting of an epigram, nor the seeming contradiction of a poor antithesis, (the delight of an ill-judging audience in a play of rhyme) nor the gingle of a more poor Paranomasia; neither is it so much the morality of a grave sentence, affected by Lucan, but more sparingly used by Virgil; but it is some lively and apt description, dressed in such colours of speech, that it sets before your eyes the absent object as perfectly and more delightfully than nature. So then the first happiness of the poet's imagination is properly invention, or finding of the thought; the second is fancy, or the variation, deriving, or moulding of that thought, as the judgment represents it proper to the subject; the third is elocution, or the art of clothing and adorning that thought, so found and varied, in apt, significant, and sounding words: the quickness of the

imagination is seen in the invention, the fertility in the fancy, and the accuracy in the expression. For the two first of these, Ovid is famous amongst the poets; for the latter, Virgil. Ovid images more often the movements and affections of the mind, either combating between two contrary passions, or extremely discomposed by one. His words therefore are the least part of his care; for he pictures nature in disorder, with which the study and choice of words is inconsistent. This is the proper wit of dialogue or discourse, and consequently of the drama, where all that is said is to be supposed the effect of sudden thought; which, though it excludes not the quickness of wit in repartees, yet admits not a too curious election of words, too frequent allusions, or use of tropes, or in fine any thing that shows remoteness of thought or labour in the writer. On the other side, Virgil speaks not so often to us in the person of another, like Ovid, but in his own: he relates almost all things as from himself, and thereby gains more liberty than the other, to express his thoughts with all the graces of elocution, to write more figuratively, and to confess as well the labour, as the force of his imagination. Though he describes his Dido well and naturally, in the violence of her passions, yet he must yield in that to the Myrrha, the Biblis, the Althæa, of Ovid; for as great an admirer of him as I am, I must acknowledge, that if I see not more of their souls than I see of Dido's, at least I have a greater concernment for them: and that convinces me, that Ovid has touched those tender strokes more delicately than Virgil could. But when action or persons are to be described, when any such image is to be set before us, how bold, how masterly are the strokes of Virgil! We see the objects he presents us with in their native figures, in their proper motions; but so we see them, as our own eyes could never have beheld them so beautiful in themselves. We see the soul of the poet, like that universal one of which he speaks, informing and moving through all his pictures:

> ——Totamque infusa per artus
> Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.

We behold him embellishing his images, as he makes Venus breathing beauty upon her son Æneas.

> '——— lumenque juventæ
> Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflârat honores:
> Quale manus addunt Ebori decus, aut ubi flavo
> Argentum Pariusve lapis circundatur auro.'

See his Tempest, his Funeral Sports, his Combat of Turnus and Æneas: and in his Georgics, which I esteem the divinest part of all his writings, the Plague, the Country, the Battle of the Bulls, the Labour of the Bees, and those many other excellent images of nature, most of which are neither great in themselves, nor have any natural ornament to bear them up: but the words wherewith he describes them are so excellent, that it might be well applied to him, which was said by Ovid, *Materiam superabat opus:* the very sound of his words has often somewhat that is connatural to the subject; and while we read him, we sit, as in a play, beholding the scenes of what he represents. To perform this, he made frequent use of tropes, which you know change the nature of a known word, by applying it to some other signification; and this is it which Horace means in his epistle to the Pisos:

> 'Dixeris egregiè, notum si callida verbum
> Reddiderit junctura novum'———

But I am sensible I have presumed too far to entertain you with a rude discourse of that art, which you both know so well, and put into practice with so much happiness. Yet before I leave Virgil, I must own the vanity to tell you, and by you the world, that he has been my master in this poem: I have followed him every where, I know not with what success, but I am sure with diligence enough: my images are many of them copied from him, and the rest are imitations of him. My expressions also are as near as the idioms of the two languages would admit of in translation. And this, sir, I have done with that boldness, for which I will stand accountable to any of our little critics, who, perhaps, are no better acquainted with him than I am. Upon your first perusal of this poem, you have taken notice of some words, which I have innovated (if it be too bold for me to say refined) upon his Latin; which, as I offer not to introduce into English prose, so I hope they are neither improper, nor altogether inelegant in verse; and, in this, Horace will again defend me.

> 'Et nova, fictaque nuper, habebunt verba fidem, si
> Græco fonte cadunt, parcè detorta'———

The inference is exceeding plain: for if a Roman poet might have liberty to coin a word, supposing only that it was derived from the Greek, was put into a Latin termination, and that he used this liberty but seldom, and with modesty; how much more justly may I challenge that privilege to do it

with the same prerequisites, from the best and most judicious of Latin writers? In some places, where either the fancy or the words were his, or any others, I have noted it in the margin, that I might not seem a plagiary; in others I have neglected it, to avoid as well tediousness, as the affectation of doing it too often. Such descriptions or images well wrought, which I promise not for mine, are, as I have said, the adequate delight of heroic poesy; for they beget admiration, which is its proper object; as the images of the burlesque, which is contrary to this, by the same reason beget laughter: for the one shows nature beautified, as in the picture of a fair woman, which we all admire; the other shows her deformed, as in that of a lazar, or of a fool with distorted face and antique gestures, at which we cannot forbear to laugh, because it is a deviation from nature. But though the same images serve equally for the Epic poesy, and for the Historic and Panegyric, which are branches of it, yet a several sort of sculpture is to be used in them. If some of them are to be like those of Juvenal, *Stantes in curribus Æmiliani*, heroes drawn in their triumphal chariots, and in their full proportion; others are to be like that of Virgil, *Spirantia mollius æra*: there is somewhat more of softness and tenderness to be shown in them. You will soon find I write not this without concern. Some, who have seen a paper of verses, which I wrote last year to her Highness the Duchess, have accused them of that only thing I could defend in them. They said, I did *humi serpere*, that I wanted not only height of fancy, but dignity of words, to set it off. I might well answer with that of Horace, *Nunc non erat his locus*; I knew I addressed them to a lady, and accordingly I affected the softness of expression, and the smoothness of measure, rather than the height of thought; and in what I did endeavour, it is no vanity to say I have succeeded. I detest arrogance; but there is some difference betwixt that and a just defence. But I will not farther bribe your candour or the reader's. I leave them to speak for me; and, if they can, to make out that character, not pretending to a greater, which I have given them.*

And now, sir, 'tis time I should relieve you from the tedious length of this account. You have better and more profitable employment for your hours, and I wrong the public to detain you longer. In conclusion, I must leave my poem

* See the preceding poem, which in the original edition of the *Annus Mirabilis* occurs in this place. *J. W.*

to you with all its faults, which I hope to find fewer in the printing by your emendations. I know you are not of the number of those, of whom the younger Pliny speaks; *Nec sunt parùm multi, qui carpere amicos suos judicium vocant:* I am rather too secure of you on that side. Your candour in pardoning my errors may make you more remiss in correcting them; if you will not withal consider that they come into the world with your approbation, and through your hands. I beg from you the greatest favour you can confer upon an absent person, since I repose upon your management what is dearest to me, my fame and reputation; and therefore I hope it will stir you up to make my poem fairer by many of your blots; if not, you know the story of the gamester who married the rich man's daughter, and when her father denied the portion, christened all her children by his surname, that if, in conclusion, they must beg, they should do so by one name, as well as by the other. But since the reproach of my faults will light on you, 'tis but reason I should do you that justice to the readers, to let them know, that if there be any thing tolerable in this poem, they owe the argument to your choice, the writing to your encouragement, the correction to your judgment, and the care of it to your friendship, to which he must ever acknowledge himself to owe all things, who is,

Sir,

The most obedient, and most
Faithful of your Servants,
JOHN DRYDEN.

From Charlton in Wiltshire,
Nov. 10, 1666.

ANNUS MIRABILIS,
THE YEAR OF WONDERS, 1666.

I.

In thriving arts long time had Holland grown,
Crouching at home and cruel when abroad:
Scarce leaving us the means to claim our own;
Our king they courted, and our merchants aw'd.

Trade, which like blood should circularly flow,
Stopp'd in their channels, found its freedom lost:
Thither the wealth of all the world did go,
And seem'd but shipwreck'd on so base a coast.

For them alone the heavens had kindly heat;
In eastern quarries ripening precious dew:
For them the Idumæan balm did sweat,
And in hot Ceilon spicy forests grew.

The sun but seem'd the labourer of their year;
Each waxing moon supplied her wat'ry store,
To swell those tides, which from the line did bear
Their brim-full vessels to the Belgian shore.

Thus, mighty in her ships, stood Carthage long,
And swept the riches of the world from far;

[10] *In eastern quarries*, &c.] Precious stones at first are dew, condensed and hardened by the warmth of the sun, or subterranean fires. *Orig. ed.* 1667.

[14] *Each waxing*, &c.] According to their opinion, who think that great heap of waters under the Line is depressed into tides by the moon, towards the Poles. *Orig. ed.*

Yet stoop'd to Rome, less wealthy, but more strong:
And this may prove our second Punic war.

What peace can be, where both to one pretend?
(But they more diligent, and we more strong)
Or if a peace, it soon must have an end;
For they would grow too powerful were it long.

Behold two nations then, engag'd so far,
That each seven years the fit must shake each land:
Where France will side to weaken us by war,
Who only can his vast designs withstand.

See how he feeds th' Iberian with delays,
To render us his timely friendship vain:
And while his secret soul on Flanders preys,
He rocks the cradle of the babe of Spain.

Such deep designs of empire does he lay
O'er them, whose cause he seems to take in hand;
And prudently would make them lords at sea,
To whom with ease he can give laws by land.

This saw our king; and long within his breast
His pensive counsels balanc'd to and fro:
He griev'd the land he freed should be oppress'd,
And he less for it than usurpers do.

His generous mind the fair ideas drew
Of fame and honour, which in dangers lay;
Where wealth, like fruit on precipices, grew,
Not to be gather'd but by birds of prey.

[29] *th' Iberian*] The Spaniard. *Orig. ed.*

The loss and gain each fatally were great;
And still his subjects call'd aloud for war;
But peaceful kings, o'er martial people set,
Each others poise and counterbalance are.

He first survey'd the charge with careful eyes,
Which none but mighty monarchs could maintain;
Yet judg'd, like vapours that from limbecs rise,
It would in richer showers descend again.

At length resolv'd t' assert the wat'ry ball,
He in himself did whole Armadoes bring:
Him aged seamen might their master call,
And choose for general, were he not their king.

It seems as every ship their sovereign knows,
His awful summons they so soon obey;
So hear the scaly herd when Proteus blows,
And so to pasture follow through the sea.

To see this fleet upon the ocean move,
Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies;
And heaven, as if there wanted lights above,
For tapers made two glaring comets rise.

59 *So hear the scaly herd*] The first edition erroneously has *here*. *T.*

59 *when Proteus blows*]

'——— Cœruleus Proteus immania ponti
Armenta, et magnas pascit sub gurgite phocas.' *Virg.*
Orig. ed.

62 *Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies*] This line seems indebted to Sir P. Sidney's Astrophel and Stella:

'Phœbus drew wide the curtaines of the skies.' *T.*

64 *two glaring comets rise*] A comet was seen first on the

Whether they unctuous exhalations are,
Fir'd by the sun, or seeming so alone:
Or each some more remote and slippery star,
Which loses footing when to mortals shown.

Or one, that bright companion of the sun,
Whose glorious aspect seal'd our new-born king;
And now, a round of greater years begun,
New influence from his walks of light did bring.

Victorious York did first, with fam'd success,
To his known valour make the Dutch give place:
Thus Heaven our monarch's fortune did confess,
Beginning conquest from his royal race.

But since it was decreed, auspicious king,
In Britain's right that thou shouldst wed the main,
Heaven, as a gage, would cast some precious thing,
And therefore doom'd that Lawson should be slain.

14th of December, 1664, which lasted almost three months; and another the 6th of April, 1665, which was visible to us fourteen days. Appendix to Sherburn's Translation of Manilius, p. 211. *D.*

[71] *And now, a round of greater years begun*]
'Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.' *Virg.*
J. W.

[80] *And therefore doom'd*, &c.] Sir John Lawson was born at Hull of but mean parentage, and bred to the sea; he was for some time employed in the merchant's service, which he left for that of the Parliament, in which he soon got a ship, and afterwards carried a flag under Monk; with him he co-operated in the restoration of the king; for which good reason he received the honour of knighthood at the Hague. He zea-

Lawson amongst the foremost met his fate,
Whom sea-green Sirens from the rocks lament:
Thus as an offering for the Grecian state,
He first was kill'd who first to battle went.

Their chief blown up in air, not waves, expir'd,
To which his pride presum'd to give the law:
The Dutch confess'd Heaven present, and retir'd,
And all was Britain the wide ocean saw.

To nearest ports their shatter'd ships repair,
Where by our dreadful cannon they lay aw'd:
So reverently men quit the open air,
Where thunder speaks the angry gods abroad.

*And now approach'd their fleet from India, fraught
With all the riches of the rising sun:
And precious sand from southern climates brought,
The fatal regions where the war begun.

Like hunted castors, conscious of their store,
Their way-laid wealth to Norway's coasts they bring:

lously supported our claim to the sovereignty of the sea, and quarrelled with De Ruyter, the Dutch admiral, for being backward in acknowledging it, an accident that partly occasioned the Dutch war. In the action here celebrated he was rear-admiral of the red, and acted immediately under his Royal Highness. His death was occasioned by a musket-ball, that wounded him in the knee, and he was not taken proper care of. We find him characterised honest, brave, loyal, and one of the most experienced seamen of his time. *D.*

85 *Their chief*] The admiral of Holland. *Orig. ed.*

* The attempt at Berghen. *Orig. ed.*

95 *southern climates*] Guinea. *Orig. ed.*

There first the North's cold bosom spices bore,
And winter brooded on the eastern spring.

By the rich scent we found our perfum'd prey,
Which, flank'd with rocks, did close in covert lie;
And round about their murdering cannon lay,
At once to threaten and invite the eye.

Fiercer than cannon, and than rocks more hard,
The English undertake th' unequal war:
Seven ships alone, by which the port is barr'd,
Besiege the Indies, and all Denmark dare.

These fight like husbands, but like lovers those:
These fain would keep, and those more fain enjoy:
And to such height their frantic passion grows,
That what both love, both hazard to destroy.

Amidst whole heaps of spices lights a ball,
And now their odours arm'd against them fly:
Some preciously by shatter'd porcelain fall,
And some by aromatic splinters die.

And though by tempests of the prize bereft,
In heaven's inclemency some ease we find:
Our foes we vanquish'd by our valour left,
And only yielded to the seas and wind.

Nor wholly lost we so deserv'd a prey;
For storms, repenting, part of it restor'd:
Which as a tribute from the Baltick sea,
The British ocean sent her mighty lord.

Go, mortals, now, and vex yourselves in vain
For wealth, which so uncertainly must come:
When what was brought so far, and with such pain,
Was only kept to lose it nearer home.

The son, who twice three months on th' ocean tost,
Prepar'd to tell what he had pass'd before,
Now sees in English ships the Holland coast,
And parents' arms, in vain, stretch'd from the shore.

This careful husband had been long away,
Whom his chaste wife and little children mourn;
Who on their fingers learn'd to tell the day
On which their father promis'd to return.

Such are the proud designs of human-kind,
And so we suffer shipwreck every where!
Alas! what port can such a pilot find,
Who in the night of fate must blindly steer!

The undistinguish'd seeds of good and ill,
Heaven, in his bosom, from our knowledge hides:
And draws them in contempt of human skill,
Which oft for friends mistaken foes provides.

Let Munster's prelate ever be accurst,

137 *Such are*, &c.] From Petronius. Si bene calculum ponas, ubique fit naufragium. *Orig. ed.*

141 *The undistinguish'd seeds of good and ill*]

Prudens futuri temporis, exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit deus. *J. W.*

145 *Let Munster's prelate*, &c.] The famous Bernard Vanghalen, bishop of Munster, excited by Charles, marched

In whom we seek the German faith in vain:
Alas! that he should teach the English first,
That fraud and avarice in the church could reign!

Happy, who never trust a stranger's will,
Whose friendship's in his interest understood!
Since money given but tempts him to be ill,
When power is too remote to make him good.

Till now, alone the mighty nations strove;
The rest at gaze, without the lists did stand:
And threat'ning France, plac'd like a painted Jove,
Kept idle thunder in his lifted hand.

That eunuch guardian of rich Holland's trade,
Who envies us what he wants power t' enjoy;
Whose noiseful valour does no foe invade,
And weak assistance will his friends destroy.

* Offended that we fought without his leave,
He takes this time his secret hate to show:
Which Charles does with a mind so calm receive,
As one that neither seeks nor shuns his foe.

With France, to aid the Dutch, the Danes unite:
France as their tyrant, Denmark as their slave.

twenty thousand men into the province of Overyssell, under the dominion of the republic of Holland, where he committed great outrages, acting rather like a captain of banditti than the leader of an army. *D.*

146 *the German faith*] Tacitus saith of them, Nullos mortalium fide aut armis ante Germanos esse. *Orig. ed.*

* War declared by France. *Orig. ed.*

But when with one three nations join to fight,
They silently confess that one more brave.

Lewis had chas'd the English from his shore;
But Charles the French as subjects does invite:
Would heaven for each some Solomon restore,
Who, by their mercy, may decide their right!

Were subjects so but only by their choice,
And not from birth did forc'd dominion take,
Our prince alone would have the public voice;
And all his neighbours' realms would deserts make.

He without fear a dangerous war pursues,
Which without rashness he began before:
As honour made him first the danger choose,
So still he makes it good on virtue's score.

The doubled charge his subjects' love supplies,
Who, in that bounty, to themselves are kind:
So glad Egyptians see their Nilus rise,
And in his plenty their abundance find.

* With equal power he does two chiefs create,
Two such as each seem'd worthiest when alone;
Each able to sustain a nation's fate,
Since both had found a greater in their own.

Both great in courage, conduct, and in fame,
Yet neither envious of the other's praise;

* Prince Rupert and Duke of Albemarle, sent to sea. *Orig. ed.*

Their duty, faith, and int'rest too the same,
Like mighty partners equally they raise.

The prince long time had courted fortune's love,
But once possess'd did absolutely reign:
Thus with their Amazons the heroes strove,
And conquer'd first those beauties they would gain.

The duke beheld, like Scipio, with disdain,
That Carthage, which he ruin'd, rise once more;
And shook aloft the fasces of the main,
To fright those slaves with what they felt before.

Together to the wat'ry camp they haste,
Whom matrons passing to their children show:
Infants' first vows for them to heaven are cast,
And future people bless them as they go.

With them no riotous pomp, nor Asian train,
T' infect a navy with their gawdy fears;
To make slow fights, and victories but vain:
But war, severely, like itself, appears.

Diffusive of themselves, where'er they pass,
They make that warmth in others they expect;
Their valour works like bodies on a glass,
And does its image on their men project.

[204] *future people*] *Examina infantium futurusque populus.* Plin. Jun. in Pan. ad Traj. *Orig. ed.*

[205] *With them no riotous pomp*] Dryden follows his great master, Milton, in making *riotous* only two syllables.—Again, in st. 59, *elephant* is contracted in like manner. Other examples of this kind occur. T.

*Our fleet divides, and straight the Dutch appear,
In number, and a fam'd commander, bold:
The narrow seas can scarce their navy bear,
Or crowded vessels can their soldiers hold.

The Duke, less numerous, but in courage more,
On wings of all the winds to combat flies:
His murdering guns a loud defiance roar,
And bloody crosses on his flag-staffs rise.

Both furl their sails, and strip them for the fight,
Their folded sheets dismiss the useless air:
Th' Elean plains could boast no nobler sight,
When struggling champions did their bodies bare.

Born each by other in a distant line,
The sea-built forts in dreadful order move:
So vast the noise, as if not fleets did join,
But lands unfix'd, and floating nations strove.

Now pass'd, on either side they nimbly tack;
Both strive to intercept and guide the wind:
And, in its eye, more closely they come back,
To finish all the deaths they left behind.

On high-rais'd decks the haughty Belgians ride,
Beneath whose shade our humble frigates go:

* Duke of Albemarle's battle, first day. *Orig. ed.*

223 *Th' Elean*, &c.] Where the Olympic games were celebrated. *Orig. ed.*

228 *lands unfix'd*] From Virgil:

'——— Credas innare revulsas
Cycladas,' &c. *Orig. ed.*

Such port the elephant bears, and so defied
By the rhinoceros her unequal foe.

And as the built, so different is the fight;
Their mounting shot is on our sails design'd:
Deep in their hulls our deadly bullets light,
And through the yielding planks a passage find.

Our dreaded admiral from far they threat,
Whose batter'd rigging their whole war receives:
All bare, like some old oak which tempests beat,
He stands, and sees below his scatter'd leaves.

Heroes of old, when wounded, shelter sought;
But he, who meets all danger with disdain,
E'en in their face his ship to anchor brought,
And steeple-high stood propt upon the main.

At this excess of courage, all amaz'd,
The foremost of his foes awhile withdraw:
With such respect in enter'd Rome they gaz'd,
Who on high chairs the god-like fathers saw.

And now, as where Patroclus' body lay,
Here Trojan chiefs advanc'd, and there the Greek;
Ours o'er the Duke their pious wings display,
And theirs the noblest spoils of Britain seek.

Meantime his busy mariners he hastes,
His shatter'd sails with rigging to restore;
And willing pines ascend his broken masts,
Whose lofty heads rise higher than before.

Straight to the Dutch he turns his dreadful prow,
More fierce th' important quarrel to decide:
Like swans, in long array his vessels show,
Whose crests advancing do the waves divide.

They charge, recharge, and all along the sea
They drive, and squander the huge Belgian fleet.
Berkley alone, who nearest danger lay,
Did a like fate with lost Crëusa meet.

The night comes on, we eager to pursue
The combat still, and they asham'd to leave:
Till the last streaks of dying day withdrew,
And doubtful moonlight did our rage deceive.

In th' English fleet each ship resounds with joy,
And loud applause of their great leader's fame:
In fiery dreams the Dutch they still destroy,
And, slumb'ring, smile at the imagin'd flame.

Not so the Holland fleet, who, tired and done,
Stretch'd on their decks like weary oxen lie:

267 *Berkley alone*, &c.] Among other remarkable passages in this engagement, the undaunted resolution of vice-admiral Berkley was particularly admired. He had many men killed on board him, and though no longer able to make resistance, yet would obstinately continue the fight, refusing quarter to the last. Being at length shot in the throat with a musket-ball, he retired to his cabin, where, stretching himself on a great table, he expired; and in that posture did the enemy, who afterwards took the ship, find the body covered with blood. *D.*

Faint sweats all down their mighty members run;
Vast bulks which little souls but ill supply.

In dreams they fearful precipices tread:
Or, shipwreck'd, labour to some distant shore:
Or in dark churches walk among the dead;
They wake with horror, and dare sleep no more.

*The morn they look on with unwilling eyes,
Till from their maintop joyful news they hear
Of ships, which by their mould bring new supplies,
And in their colours Belgian lions bear.

Our watchful general had discern'd from far
This mighty succour, which made glad the foe:
He sigh'd, but, like a father of the war,
His face spake hope, while deep his sorrows flow.

His wounded men he first sends off to shore,
Never, till now, unwilling to obey: [plore,
They not their wounds, but want of strength de-
And think them happy who with him can stay.

Then to the rest, Rejoice, said he, to-day;
In you the fortune of Great Britain lies:

280 *Vast bulks which little souls but ill supply*] So Milton, in the spirited speech which he gives to Samson as an answer to the cowardly language of the giant Harapha, *Sam. Agon.* ver. 1237:

Go, baffled coward! lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, *bulk without spirit vast*,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low, &c. *T.*

* Second day's battle. *Orig. ed.*

Among so brave a people, you are they
Whom heaven has chose to fight for such a prize.

If number English courages could quell,
We should at first have shunn'd, not met, our foes:
Whose numerous sails the fearful only tell:
Courage from hearts, and not from numbers, grows.

He said, nor needed more to say: with haste
To their known stations cheerfully they go;
And all at once, disdaining to be last,
Solicit every gale to meet the foe.

Nor did th' encourag'd Belgians long delay,
But bold in others, not themselves, they stood:
So thick, our navy scarce could steer their way,
But seem'd to wander in a moving wood.

Our little fleet was now engag'd so far,
That, like the sword-fish in the whale, they fought:
The combat only seem'd a civil war,
Till through their bowels we our passage wrought.

Never had valour, no not ours, before
Done ought like this upon the land or main,
Where not to be o'ercome was to do more
Than all the conquests former kings did gain.

The mighty ghosts of our great Harries rose,
And armed Edwards look'd with anxious eyes,
To see this fleet among unequal foes,
By which fate promis'd them their Charles should rise.

Meantime the Belgians tack upon our rear,
And raking chace-guns through our sterns they send:
Close by, their fire-ships, like jackals, appear,
Who on their lions for the prey attend.

Silent in smoke of cannon they come on:
Such vapours once did fiery Cacus hide:
In these the height of pleas'd revenge is shown,
Who burn contented by another's side.

Sometimes from fighting squadrons of each fleet,
Deceiv'd themselves, or to preserve some friend,
Two grappling Ætnas on the ocean meet,
And English fires with Belgian flames contend.

Now, at each tack, our little fleet grows less;
And, like maim'd fowl, swim lagging on the main;
Their greater loss their numbers scarce confess,
While they lose cheaper than the English gain.

Have you not seen, when, whistled from the fist,
Some falcon stoops at what her eye design'd,
And, with her eagerness the quarry miss'd,
Straight flies at check, and clips it down the wind?

The dastard crow that to the wood made wing,
And sees the groves no shelter can afford,
With her loud caws her craven kind does bring,
Who, safe in numbers, cuff the noble bird.

Among the Dutch thus Albemarle did fare:
He could not conquer, and disdain'd to fly;

Past hope of safety, 'twas his latest care,
Like falling Cæsar, decently to die.

Yet pity did his manly spirit move,
To see those perish who so well had fought;
And generously with his despair he strove,
Resolv'd to live till he their safety wrought.

Let other muses write his prosperous fate,
Of conquer'd nations tell, and kings restor'd:
But mine shall sing of his eclips'd estate,
Which, like the sun's, more wonders does afford.

He drew his mighty frigates all before,
On which the foe his fruitless force employs:
His weak ones deep into his rear he bore
Remote from guns, as sick men from the noise.

His fiery cannon did their passage guide,
And following smoke obscur'd them from the foe:
Thus Israel safe from the Egyptian's pride,
By flaming pillars, and by clouds, did go.

Elsewhere the Belgian force we did defeat,
But here our courages did theirs subdue;
So Xenophon once led that fam'd retreat,
Which first the Asian empire overthrew.

The foe approach'd, and one for his bold sin
Was sunk; as he that touch'd the ark was slain:
The wild waves master'd him and suck'd him in,
And smiling eddies dimpled on the main.

This seen, the rest at awful distance stood;
As if they had been there as servants set
To stay, or to go on, as he thought good,
And not pursue but wait on his retreat.

So Libyan huntsmen, on some sandy plain,
From shady coverts rous'd, the lion chase:
The kingly beast roars out with loud disdain,
And slowly moves, unknowing to give place.

But if some one approach to dare his force,
He swings his tail, and swiftly turns him round;
With one paw seizes on his trembling horse,
And with the other tears him to the ground.

Amidst these toils succeeds the balmy night;
Now hissing waters the quench'd guns restore;

384 *And slowly moves*] The simile is Virgil's:

'———— Vestigia retro
Improperata refert,' &c. *Orig. ed.*

386 *He swings his tail*] The metre of this line, perhaps, introduced *swings* instead of the more emphatic word *swinges*, applied to a lion enraged by Chapman, in his Cæs. and Pompey, 1607:

'And then his sides he *swinges* with his *sterne*.'

And by Sylvester, Du Bart. p. 205, 4to. ed.

'Then often *swinging* with his sinewie traine,' &c.

Milton, in a line of admirable effect, has applied the word to the old dragon, who,

'Wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.'

Ode Nativ. st. 18.

Waller also describes the '*tail's* impetuous *swinge*' of the whale, Batt. Summ. 1sl. c. iii. *T.*

And weary waves, withdrawing from the fight,
Lie lull'd and panting on the silent shore.

The moon shone clear on the becalmed flood,
Where while her beams like glittering silver play
Upon the deck our careful general stood,
And deeply mus'd on the succeeding day.

That happy sun, said he, will rise again,
Who twice victorious did our navy see:
And I alone must view him rise in vain,
Without one ray of all his star for me.

Yet like an English general will I die,
And all the ocean make my spacious grave:
Women and cowards on the land may lie,
The sea's a tomb that's proper for the brave.

Restless he pass'd the remnants of the night,
Till the fresh air proclaim'd the morning nigh:

391 *weary waves*] From Statius Sylv.

'Nec trucibus fluviis idem sonus: occidit horror
Æquoris, antennis maria acclinata quiescunt.'

Orig. ed.

396 *succeeding day*] The 3rd of June, famous for two former victories. *Orig. ed.*

401 *Yet like an English general will I die,*
And all the ocean make my spacious grave:
Women and cowards on the land may lie,
The sea's a tomb that's proper for the brave]

This speech contains nearly the same words that the Duke of Albemarle spoke in a council the evening before the battle, in which he fought with amazing intrepidity, and all that determined resignation here implied. *D.*

And burning ships, the martyrs of the fight,
With paler fires beheld the eastern sky.

*But now, his stores of ammunition spent,
His naked valour is his only guard;
Rare thunders are from his dumb cannon sent,
And solitary guns are scarcely heard.

Thus far had fortune power, here forc'd to stay,
Nor longer durst with virtue be at strife:
This, as a ransom, Albemarle did pay
For all the glories of so great a life.

For now brave Rupert from afar appears,
Whose waving streamers the glad general knows:
With full spread sails his eager navy steers,
And every ship in swift proportion grows.

The anxious prince had heard the cannon long,
And from that length of time dire omens drew
Of English overmatch'd, and Dutch too strong,
Who never fought three days, but to pursue.

Then, as an eagle, who with pious care
Was beating widely on the wing for prey,
To her now silent eyry does repair,
And finds her callow infants forc'd away.

Stung with her love, she stoops upon the plain,
The broken air loud whistling as she flies:
She stops and listens, and shoots forth again,
And guides her pinions by her young ones' cries.

* Third day. *Orig. ed.*

With such kind passion hastes the prince to fight,
And spreads his flying canvass to the sound;
Him, whom no danger, were he there, could fright,
Now, absent, every little noise can wound.

As in a drought the thirsty creatures cry,
And gape upon the gather'd clouds for rain;
And first the martlet meets it in the sky,
And with wet wings joys all the feather'd train.

With such glad hearts did our despairing men
Salute the appearance of the prince's fleet;
And each ambitiously would claim the ken,
That with first eyes did distant safety meet.

The Dutch, who came like greedy hinds before,
To reap the harvest their ripe ears did yield;
Now look like those, when rolling thunders roar,
And sheets of lightning blast the standing field.

Full in the prince's passage, hills of sand
And dangerous flats in secret ambush lay,
Where the false tides skim o'er the cover'd land,
And seamen with dissembled depths betray.

The wily Dutch, who, like fallen angels, fear'd
This new Messiah's coming, there did wait,
And round the verge their braving vessels steer'd,
To tempt his courage with so fair a bait.

But he, unmov'd, contemns their idle threat,
Secure of fame whene'er he please to fight:
His cold experience tempers all his heat,
And inbred worth does boasting valour slight.

Heroic virtue did his actions guide,
And he the substance not th' appearance chose;
To rescue one such friend he took more pride,
Than to destroy whole thousands of such foes.

But when approach'd, in strict embraces bound,
Rupert and Albemarle together grow;
He joys to have his friend in safety found,
Which he to none but to that friend would owe.

The cheerful soldiers, with new stores supplied,
Now long to execute their spleenful will;
And, in revenge for those three days they tried,
Wish one, like Joshua's, when the sun stood still.

*Thus reinforc'd, against the adverse fleet,
Still doubling ours, brave Rupert leads the way:
With the first blushes of the morn they meet,
And bring night back upon the new-born day.

His presence soon blows up the kindling fight,
And his loud guns speak thick like angry men:
It seem'd as slaughter had been breath'd all night,
And death new pointed his dull dart again.

The Dutch too well his mighty conduct knew,
And matchless courage, since the former fight:
Whose navy like a stiff-stretch'd cord did show,
Till he bore in and bent them into flight.

The wind he shares, while half their fleet offends
His open side, and high above him shows:

* Fourth day's battle. *Orig. ed.*

Upon the rest at pleasure he descends
And doubly harm'd he double harms bestows.

Behind, the general mends his weary pace
And sullenly to his revenge he sails:
So glides some trodden serpent on the grass,
And long behind his wounded volume trails.

The increasing sound is borne to either shore,
And for their stakes the throwing nations fear:
Their passions double with the cannons' roar,
And with warm wishes each man combats there.

Ply'd thick and close as when the fight begun,
Their huge unwieldy navy wastes away;
So sicken waning moons too near the sun,
And blunt their crescents on the edge of day.

And now reduc'd on equal terms to fight,
Their ships like wasted patrimonies show;
Where the thin scattering trees admit the light,
And shun each others shadows as they grow.

The warlike prince had sever'd from the rest
Two giant ships, the pride of all the main;
Which with his one so vigorously he press'd,
And flew so home they could not rise again.

Already batter'd, by his lee they lay,
In vain upon the passing winds they call:
The passing winds through their torn canvass play,
And flagging sails on heartless sailors fall.

Their open'd sides receive a gloomy light,
Dreadful as day let in to shades below;
Without, grim death rides barefac'd in their sight,
And urges entering billows as they flow.

When one dire shot, the last they could supply,
Close by the board the prince's mainmast bore:
All three now helpless by each other lie,
And this offends not, and those fear no more.

So have I seen some fearful hare maintain
A course, till tir'd before the dog she lay:
Who, stretch'd behind her, pants upon the plain,
Past power to kill, as she to get away.

With his loll'd tongue he faintly licks his prey;
His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies;
She, trembling, creeps upon the ground away,
And looks back to him with beseeching eyes.

The prince unjustly does his stars accuse,
Which hinder'd him to push his fortune on;
For what they to his courage did refuse,
By mortal valour never must be done.

This lucky hour the wise Batavian takes,
And warns his tatter'd fleet to follow home:
Proud to have so got off with equal stakes,
Where 'twas a triumph not to be o'ercome.

536 *a triumph not to be o'ercome*] From Horace:

——————— 'quos opimus
Fallere et effugere est triumphus.' *Orig. ed.*

The general's force, as kept alive by fight,
Now, not oppos'd, no longer can pursue:
Lasting till heaven had done his courage right;
When he had conquer'd he his weakness knew.

He casts a frown on the departing foe,
And sighs to see him quit the watery field:
His stern fix'd eyes no satisfaction show,
For all the glories which the fight did yield.

Though, as when fiends did miracles avow,
He stands confess'd e'en by the boastful Dutch;
He only does his conquest disavow,
And thinks too little what they found too much.

Return'd, he with the fleet resolv'd to stay;
No tender thoughts of home his heart divide;
Domestic joys and cares he puts away;
For realms are households which the great must guide.

As those who unripe veins in mines explore,
On the rich bed again the warm turf lay,
Till time digests the yet imperfect ore,
And know it will be gold another day:

So looks our monarch on this early fight,
Th' essay and rudiments of great success:
Which all-maturing time must bring to light,
While he, like heaven, does each day's labour bless.

Heaven ended not the first or second day,
Yet each was perfect to the work design'd:
God and kings work, when they their work survey,
A passive aptness in all subjects find.

* In burden'd vessels first, with speedy care,
His plenteous stores do season'd timber send:
Thither the brawny carpenters repair,
And as the surgeons of maim'd ships attend.

With cord and canvass from rich Hamburgh sent,
His navies molted wings he imps once more;
Tall Norway fir, their masts in battle spent,
And English oak, sprung leaks and planks, restore.

All hands employ'd the royal work grows warm:
Like labouring bees on a long summer's day,
Some sound the trumpet for the rest to swarm,
And some on bells of tasted lilies play.

With glewy wax some new foundation lay
Of virgin combs, which from the roof are hung:
Some arm'd within doors upon duty stay,
Or tend the sick, or educate the young.

So here some pick out bullets from the sides,
Some drive old okum through each seam and rift:
Their left hand does the calking-iron guide,
The rattling mallet with the right they lift.

With boiling pitch another near at hand,
From friendly Sweden brought, the seams instops:

* His majesty repairs the fleet. *Orig. ed.*

570 *wings he imps*] See Mr. Warton's note on Milton's 15th Sonnet, 'to *imp* their serpent-*wings*:' where he observes that the expression occurs in poets much later than Milton. The latest, whom I have hitherto found using this old poetical expression, is Shadwell, by whom it is employed towards the end of his *Isabella*. *T.*

Which well paid o'er, the salt sea waves withstand,
And shakes them from the rising beak in drops.

Some the gall'd ropes with dawby marling bind,
Or searcloth masts with strong tarpawling coats:
To try new shrouds one mounts into the wind,
And one, below, their ease or stiffness notes.

Our careful monarch stands in person by,
His new-cast cannons' firmness to explore:
The strength of big-corn'd powder loves to try,
And ball and cartrage sorts for every bore.

Each day brings fresh supplies of arms and men,
And ships which all last winter were abroad;
And such as fitted since the fight had been,
Or new from stocks were fall'n into the road.

The goodly London in her gallant trim,
(The phœnix, daughter of the vanish'd old),
Like a rich bride does to the ocean swim,
And on her shadow rides in floating gold.

Her flag aloft spread ruffling to the wind,
And sanguine streamers seem the flood to fire:
The weaver charm'd with what his loom design'd,
Goes on to sea, and knows not to retire.

With roomy decks, her guns of mighty strength,
Whose low-laid mouths each mounting billow laves:
Deep in her draught, and warlike in her length,
She seems a sea-wasp flying on the waves.

This martial present, piously design'd,
The loyal city give their best-lov'd king:
And, with a bounty ample as the wind,
Built, fitted, and maintain'd, to aid him bring.

By viewing nature, nature's handmaid, art
Makes mighty things from small beginnings grow:
Thus fishes first to shipping did impart,
Their tail the rudder, and their head the prow.

Some log perhaps upon the waters swam,
A useless drift, which rudely cut within,
And, hollow'd, first a floating trough became,
And cross some rivulet passage did begin.

In shipping such as this, the Irish kern,
And untaught Indian, on the stream did glide:
Ere sharp-keel'd boats to stem the flood did learn,
Or fin-like oars did spread from either side.

Add but a sail, and Saturn so appear'd,
When from lost empire he to exile went,
And with the golden age to Tyber steer'd,
Where coin and first commerce he did invent.

Rude as their ships was navigation then;
No useful compass or meridian known;
Coasting, they kept the land within their ken,
And knew no North but when the Pole-star shone.

Of all who since have used the open sea,
Than the bold English none more fame have won:

Beyond the year, and out of heaven's high way,
They make discoveries where they see no sun.

But what so long in vain, and yet unknown,
By poor mankind's benighted wit is sought,
Shall in this age to Britain first be shown,
And hence be to admiring nations taught.

The ebbs of tides and their mysterious flow,
We, as arts' elements, shall understand,
And as by line upon the ocean go,
Whose paths shall be familiar as the land.

Instructed ships shall sail to quick commerce,*
By which remotest regions are allied;
Which makes one city of the universe;
Where some may gain, and all may be supplied.

Then we upon our globe's last verge shall go,
And view the ocean leaning on the sky:
From thence our rolling neighbours we shall know,
And on the lunar world securely pry.

This I foretell from your auspicious care,†
Who great in search of God and nature grow;

* By a more exact knowledge of longitudes. *Orig. ed.*

† Apostrophe to the Royal Society. *Orig. ed.*

658 *great in search*] Alludes to the Royal Society. *Dr. J. W.*

Who best your wise Creator's praise declare,
Since best to praise his works is best to know.

O truly royal! who behold the law
And rule of beings in your Maker's mind:
And thence, like limbecs, rich ideas draw,
To fit the levell'd use of human-kind.

But first the toils of war we must endure,
And from the injurious Dutch redeem the seas.
War makes the valiant of his right secure,
And gives up fraud to be chastis'd with ease.

Already were the Belgians on our coast,
Whose fleet more mighty every day became
By late success, which they did falsely boast,
And now by first appearing seem'd to claim.

Designing, subtle, diligent, and close,
They knew to manage war with wise delay:
Yet all those arts their vanity did cross,
And by their pride their prudence did betray.

Nor staid the English long; but well supplied,
Appear as numerous as th' insulting foe:
The combat now by courage must be tried,
And the success the braver nation show.

There was the Plymouth squadron now come in,
Which in the Straits last winter was abroad;
Which twice on Biscay's working bay had been,
And on the midland sea the French had aw'd.

Old expert Allen, loyal all along,
Fam'd for his action on the Smyrna fleet:
And Holmes, whose name shall live in epic song,
While music numbers, or while verse has feet.

Holmes, the Achates of the general's fight;
Who first bewitch'd our eyes with Guinea gold:
As once old Cato in the Roman sight
The tempting fruits of Afric did unfold.

With him went Sprag, as bountiful as brave,
Whom his high courage to command had brought:
Harman, who did the twice-fir'd Harry save,
And in his burning ship undaunted fought.

Young Hollis on a muse by Mars begot,
Born, Cæsar-like, to write and act great deeds:

686 *Old expert Allen*, &c.] Sir Thomas Allen was admiral of the white. *D.*

690 *Holmes, the Achates of the*, &c.] Sir Robert Holmes was rear-admiral of the white, called the Achates from his eagerness to support the general. Achates was the faithful companion of Æneas. For an illustration of the two last lines of this stanza, see our notes to the Satire on the Dutch. *D.*

694 *With him went Sprag*, &c.] Sir Edward Sprag served under Sir Jeremiah Smith, who carried the blue flag. he was drowned passing from one ship to another, in a fight with Van Tromp, on the eleventh of August, 1672, bearing the character of a gallant officer, and an accomplished gentleman. *D.*

695 *his high courage*] The *courage haut* of Spenser and our elder poets, which Dryden no doubt had in mind. *T.*

Impatient to revenge his fatal shot,
His right hand doubly to his left succeeds.

Thousands were there in darker fame that dwell,
Whose deeds some nobler poem shall adorn :
And though to me unknown, they sure fought well,
Whom Rupert led, and who were British born.

Of every size a hundred fighting sail,
So vast the navy now at anchor rides,
That underneath it the press'd waters fail,
And with its weight it shoulders off the tides.

Now, anchors weigh'd, the seamen shout so shrill,
That heaven, and earth, and the wide ocean rings :
A breeze from westward waits their sails to fill,
And rests in those high beds his downy wings.

The wary Dutch this gathering storm foresaw,
And durst not bide it on the English coast :
Behind their treacherous shallows they withdraw,
And there lay snares to catch the British host.

So the false spider, when her nets are spread,
Deep ambush'd in her silent den does lie :
And feels far off the trembling of her thread,
Whose filmy cord should bind the struggling fly.

Then if at last she find him fast beset,
She issues forth, and runs along her loom :
She joys to touch the captive in her net,
And drag the little wretch in triumph home.

The Belgians hop'd that, with disorder'd haste,
Our deep-cut keels upon the sands might run:
Or, if with caution leisurely were past,
Their numerous gross might charge us one by one.

But with a fore-wind pushing them above,
And swelling tide that heav'd them from below,
O'er the blind flats our warlike squadrons move,
And with spread sails to welcome battle go.

It seem'd as there the British Neptune stood,
With all his hosts of waters at command,
Beneath them to submit th' officious flood;
And with his trident shov'd them off the sand.

To the pale foes they suddenly draw near,
And summon them to unexpected fight;
They start like murderers when ghosts appear,
And draw their curtains in the dead of night.

Now van to van the foremost squadrons meet,*
The midmost battles hasting up behind:
Who view far off the storm of falling sleet,
And hear their thunder rattling in the wind.

At length the adverse admirals appear;
The two bold champions of each country's right:
Their eyes describe the lists as they come near,
And draw the lines of death before they fight.

* Second battle. *Orig. ed.*

The distance judg'd for shot of every size,
The linstocks touch, the ponderous ball expires:
The vigorous seaman every porthole plies,
And adds his heart to every gun he fires!

Fierce was the fight on the proud Belgians' side,
For honour, which they seldom sought before:
But now they by their own vain boasts were tied,
And forc'd, at least in show to prize it more.

But sharp remembrance on the English part,
And shame of being match'd by such a foe,
Rouse conscious virtue up in every heart,
And seeming to be stronger makes them so.

Nor long the Belgians could that fleet sustain,
Which did two generals' fates, and Cæsar's bear:
Each several ship a victory did gain,
As Rupert or as Albemarle were there.

Their batter'd Admiral too soon withdrew,
Unthank'd by ours for his unfinish'd fight:
But he the minds of his Dutch masters knew,
Who call'd that providence which we call'd flight.

Never did men more joyfully obey,
Or sooner understood the sign to fly:
With such alacrity they bore away,
As if to praise them all the States stood by.

761 *And seeming to be stronger makes them so*]
'Possunt, quia posse videntur.' *Virg.*
Orig. ed.

O famous leader of the Belgian fleet,
Thy monument inscribed such praise shall wear,
As Varro timely flying once did meet,
Because he did not of his Rome despair.

Behold that navy, which a while before
Provok'd the tardy English to the fight;
Now draw their beaten vessels close to shore,
As larks lie dar'd to shun the hobbies flight.

Whoe'er would English monuments survey,
In other records may our courage know:
But let them hide the story of this day,
Whose fame was blemish'd by too base a foe.

Or if too busily they will inquire
Into a victory which we disdain;
Then let them know, the Belgians did retire
Before the patron saint of injur'd Spain.

788 ——— *the Belgians did retire*
Before the patron saint of injur'd Spain]

The victory was completed on the twenty-fifth day of July, a day sacred to St. James the Great, patron of Spain, which nation our author calls injur'd, inasmuch as the Hollanders had rebelled against King Philip II. being aided by Queen Elizabeth: and the next stanza refers to this transaction, for which the poet supposes us now to have atoned. The monarchy mentioned in the 199th stanza is Spain, with which Queen Elizabeth had been long at variance, when, in our author's opinion, we overlooked the growing power of France and Holland, which merited much more our attention. *D.*

789 *patron saint*] St. James, on whose day this victory was gained. *Orig. ed.*

Repenting England this revengeful day
To Philip's manes did an offering bring:
England, which first, by leading them astray,
Hatch'd up rebellion to destroy her king.

Our fathers bent their baneful industry,
To check a monarchy that slowly grew;
But did not France or Holland's fate foresee,
Whose rising power to swift dominion flew.

In fortune's empire blindly thus we go,
And wander after pathless destiny;
Whose dark resorts since prudence cannot know,
In vain it would provide for what shall be.

But whate'er English to the bless'd shall go,
And the fourth Harry or first Orange meet;
Find him disowning of a Bourbon foe,
And him detesting a Batavian fleet.

Now on their coasts our conquering navy rides,
Waylays their merchants, and their land besets;
Each day new wealth without their care provides;
They lie asleep with prizes in their nets.

So, close behind some promontory lie
The huge leviathans to attend their prey;
And give no chase, but swallow in the fry,
Which through their gaping jaws mistake the way.

791 *Philip's manes*] Philip the Second, of Spain, against whom the Hollanders rebelling, were aided by Queen Elizabeth. *Orig. ed.*

* Nor was this all; in ports and roads remote,
Destructive fires among whole fleets we send;
Triumphant flames upon the water float,
And out-bound ships at home their voyage end.

Those various squadrons, variously design'd,
Each vessel freighted with a several load,
Each squadron waiting for a several wind,
All find but one, to burn them in the road.

Some bound for Guiney, golden sand to find,
Bore all the gawds the simple natives wear:
Some, for the pride of Turkish courts design'd,
For folded turbans finest Holland bear.

Some English wool, vex'd in a Belgian loom,
And into cloth of spungy softness made,
Did into France or colder Denmark doom,
To ruin with worse ware our staple trade.

Our greedy seamen rummage every hold,
Smile on the booty of each wealthier chest;
And, as the priests who with their gods make bold,
Take what they like, and sacrifice the rest.

† But ah; how insincere are all our joys! [stay:
Which, sent from heaven, like lightning make no
Their palling taste the journey's length destroys,
Or grief, sent post, o'ertakes them on the way.

* Burning of the fleet in the Vly, by Sir Robert Holmes. *Orig. ed.*

† Transition to the fire of London. *Orig. ed.*

837 *Or grief, sent post,* &c.] It is the same sentiment in Milton's Samson Agonistes, ver. 1538:

Swell'd with our late successes on the foe,
Which France and Holland wanted power to cross,
We urge an unseen fate to lay us low,
And feed their envious eyes with English loss.

Each element his dread command obeys,
Who makes or ruins with a smile or frown;
Who, as by one he did our nation raise,
So now he with another pulls us down.

Yet London, empress of the northern clime,
By a high fate thou greatly didst expire:
Great as the world's, which, at the death of time,
Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire!

As when some dire usurper heaven provides,
To scourge his country with a lawless sway;
His birth perhaps some petty village hides,
And sets his cradle out of fortune's way.

Till fully ripe his swelling fate breaks out,
And hurries him to mighty mischiefs on:
His prince surpris'd at first no ill could doubt,
And wants the power to meet it when 'tis known.

'For evil news rides post, while good news bates.' Milton's however is the closer imitation of Statius, as I have elsewhere observed:

'Spargitur in turmas solito pernicior index
Cùm lugenda refert.' *T.*

848 *Great as the world's, which, at the death of time*
Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire]

'Quum mare, quum tellus, correptaque regia cœli,
Ardeat,' &c. *Ovid. Orig. ed.*

Such was the rise of this prodigious fire,
Which, in mean buildings first obscurely bred,
From thence did soon to open streets aspire,
And straight to palaces and temples spread.

The diligence of trades and noiseful gain,
And luxury more late, asleep were laid:
All was the night's; and in her silent reign
No sound the rest of nature did invade.

In this deep quiet, from what source unknown,
Those seeds of fire their fatal birth disclose;
And first few scattering sparks about were blown,
Big with the flames that to our ruin rose.

Then in some close-pent room it crept along,
And, smouldering as it went, in silence fed;
Till th' infant monster, with devouring strong,
Walk'd boldly upright with exalted head.

Now like some rich or mighty murderer,
Too great for prison, which he breaks with gold;
Who fresher for new mischiefs does appear,
And dares the world to tax him with the old.

So scapes th' insulting fire his narrow jail,
And makes small outlets into open air:
There the fierce winds his tender force assail,
And beat him downward to his first repair.

The winds, like crafty courtezans, withheld
His flames from burning, but to blow them more:

882 *like crafty*, &c.] Hæc arte tractabat cupidum virum, ut illius animum inopia accenderet. *Orig. ed.*

And every fresh attempt he is repell'd
With faint denials weaker than before.

And now, no longer letted of his prey,
He leaps up at it with enrag'd desire:
O'erlooks the neighbours with a wide survey,
And nods at every house his threatening fire.

The ghosts of traitors from the bridge descend,
With bold fanatic spectres to rejoice:
About the fire into a dance they bend,
And sing their sabbath notes with feeble voice.

Our guardian angel saw them where they sate
Above the palace of our slumbering king;
He sigh'd, abandoning his charge to fate,
And, drooping, oft look'd back upon the wing.

At length the crackling noise and dreadful blaze
Call'd up some waking lover to the sight;
And long it was ere he the rest could raise,
Whose heavy eyelids yet were full of night.

The next to danger, hot pursu'd by fate,
Half-cloth'd, half-naked, hastily retire:
And frighted mothers strike their breasts too late,
For helpless infants left amidst the fire.

Their cries soon waken all the dwellers near;
Now murmuring noises rise in every street;
The more remote run stumbling with their fear,
And in the dark men justle as they meet.

So weary bees in little cells repose;
But if night-robbers lift the well-stor'd hive,
A humming through their waxen city grows,
And out upon each others wings they drive.

Now streets grow throng'd and busy as by day:
Some run for buckets to the hallow'd quire:
Some cut the pipes, and some the engines play;
And some more bold mount ladders to the fire.

In vain; for from the East a Belgian wind
His hostile breath through the dry rafters sent;
The flames impell'd soon left their foes behind,
And forward with a wanton fury went.

A key of fire ran all along the shore,
And lighten'd all the river with a blaze:
The waken'd tides began again to roar,
And wondering fish in shining waters gaze.

Old father Thames rais'd up his reverend head,
But fear'd the fate of Simois would return:
Deep in his ooze he sought his sedgy bed,
And shrunk his waters back into his urn.

The fire, meantime, walks in a broader gross:
To either hand his wings he opens wide:
He wades the streets, and straight he reaches cross,
And plays his longing flames on th' other side.

923 *And lighten'd all the river with a blaze*]
'Sigæa igni freta lata relucent.' *Virg.*
Orig. ed.

At first they warm, then scorch, and then they take;
Now with long necks from side to side they feed:
At length, grown strong, their mother-fire forsake,
And a new colony of flames succeed.

To every nobler portion of the town
The curling billows roll their restless tide:
In parties now they straggle up and down,
As armies, unoppos'd, for prey divide.

One mighty squadron with a side-wind sped,
Through narrow lanes his cumber'd fire does haste,
By powerful charms of gold and silver led,
The Lombard bankers and the Change to waste.

Another backward to the Tower would go,
And slowly eats his way against the wind:
But the main body of the marching foe
Against th' imperial palace is design'd.

Now day appears, and with the day the king,
Whose early care had robb'd him of his rest:
Far off the cracks of falling houses ring,
And shrieks of subjects pierce his tender breast.

Near as he draws, thick harbingers of smoke
With gloomy pillars cover all the place;
Whose little intervals of night are broke
By sparks, that drive against his sacred face.

More than his guards his sorrows made him known,
And pious tears, which down his cheeks did shower:
The wretched in his grief forgot their own;
So much the pity of a king has power.

He wept the flames of what he lov'd so well,
And what so well had merited his love:
For never prince in grace did more excel,
Our royal city more in duty strove.

Nor with an idle care did he behold:
Subjects may grieve, but monarchs must redress;
He cheers the fearful and commends the bold,
And makes despairers hope for good success.

Himself directs what first is to be done,
And orders all the succours which they bring:
The helpful and the good about him run,
And form an army worthy such a king.

He sees the dire contagion spread so fast,
That, where it seizes, all relief is vain:
And therefore must unwillingly lay waste
That country, which would else the foe maintain.

The powder blows up all before the fire:
Th' amazed flames stand gather'd on a heap;
And from the precipice's brink retire,
Afraid to venture on so large a leap.

Thus fighting fires a while themselves consume,
But straight like Turks, forc'd on to win or die,
They first lay tender bridges of their fume,
And o'er the breach in unctuous vapours fly.

Part stays for passage, 'till a gust of wind
Ships o'er their forces in a shining sheet:

Part creeping under ground their journey blind,
And climbing from below their fellows meet,

Thus to some desart plain, or old wood-side,
Dire night-hags come from far to dance their round;
And o'er broad rivers on their fiends they ride,
Or sweep in clouds above the blasted ground.

No help avails: for, hydra-like, the fire
Lifts up his hundred heads to aim his way:
And scarce the wealthy can one half retire,
Before he rushes in to share the prey.

The rich grow suppliant, and the poor grow proud:
Those offer mighty gain, and these ask more:
So void of pity is th' ignoble crowd,
When others ruin may increase their store.

As those, who live by shores, with joy behold
Some wealthy vessel split or stranded nigh;
And from the rocks leap down for shipwreck'd gold,
And seek the tempest which the others fly:

So these but wait the owners' last despair,
And what's permitted to the flames invade;

[1002] *As those, who live by shores,* &c.] The gallant Sir Cloudesley Shovel was barbarously murdered on the coast of Cornwall, as he swam on shore, by a woman, who was incited to the barbarous act by the sight of a ring, which he wore on his finger. This is related on the authority of the late Lord Peterborough, who told it to Sir John Mordaunt, who related it to the late Dr. Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph.
J. W.

E'en from their jaws they hungry morsels tear,
And on their backs the spoils of Vulcan lade.

The days were all in this lost labour spent;
And when the weary king gave place to night,
His beams he to his royal brother lent,
And so shone still in his reflective light.

Night came, but without darkness or repose,
A dismal picture of the general doom;
Where souls distracted when the trumpet blows,
And half unready with their bodies come.

Those who have homes, when home they do repair,
To a last lodging call their wandering friends:
Their short uneasy sleeps are broke with care,
To look how near their own destruction tends.

Those who have none, sit round where once it was,
And with full eyes each wonted room require:
Haunting the yet warm ashes of the place,
As murder'd men walk where they did expire.

Some stir up coals and watch the vestal fire,
Others in vain from sight of ruin run;
And, while through burning labyrinths they retire,
With loathing eyes repeat what they would shun.

The most in fields like herded beasts lie down,
To dews obnoxious on the grassy floor;
And while their babes in sleep their sorrows drown,
Sad parents watch the remnants of their store.

While by the motion of the flames they guess
What streets are burning now, and what are near,
An infant waking to the paps would press,
And meets, instead of milk, a falling tear.

No thought can ease them but their sovereign's care,
Whose praise th' afflicted as their comfort sing:
E'en those, whom want might drive to just despair,
Think life a blessing under such a king.

Meantime he sadly suffers in their grief,
Out-weeps a hermit, and out-prays a saint:
All the night long he studies their relief,
How they may be supplied, and he may want.

O God, said he, thou Patron of my days,*
Guide of my youth in exile and distress!
Who me unfriended brought'st by wondrous ways,
The kingdom of my fathers to possess:

Be thou my Judge, with what unwearied care
I since have labour'd for my people's good;
To bind the bruises of a civil war,
And stop the issues of their wasting blood.

Thou, who hast taught me to forgive the ill,
And recompense, as friends, the good misled:
If mercy be a precept of thy will,
Return that mercy on thy servant's head.

Or if my heedless youth has stept astray,
Too soon forgetful of thy gracious hand;

* King's prayer. *Orig. ed.*

On me alone thy just displeasure lay,
But take thy judgments from this mourning land.

We all have sinn'd, and thou hast laid us low,
As humble earth from whence at first we came:
Like flying shades before the clouds we show,
And shrink like parchment in consuming flame.

O let it be enough what thou hast done;
When spotted deaths ran arm'd thro' every street,
With poison'd darts which not the good could shun,
The speedy could out-fly, or valiant meet.

The living few, and frequent funerals then,
Proclaim'd thy wrath on this forsaken place:
And now those few, who are return'd again,
Thy searching judgments to their dwellings trace.

O pass not, Lord, an absolute decree,
Or bind thy sentence unconditional:
But in thy sentence our remorse foresee,
And in that foresight this thy doom recall.

Thy threat'nings, Lord, as thine thou mayst revoke:
But, if immutable and fix'd they stand,
Continue still thyself to give the stroke,
And let not foreign foes oppress thy land.

Th' Eternal heard, and from the heavenly quire
Chose out the cherub with the flaming sword;
And bad him swiftly drive th' approaching fire
From where our naval magazines were stor'd.

The blessed minister his wings display'd,
And like a shooting star he cleft the night:
He charg'd the flames, and those that disobey'd
He lash'd to duty with his sword of light.

The fugitive flames, chastis'd, went forth to prey
On pious structures, by our fathers rear'd;
By which to heaven they did affect the way,
Ere faith in churchmen without works was heard.

The wanting orphans saw with wat'ry eyes
Their founders' charity in dust laid low;
And sent to God their ever-answer'd cries,
For he protects the poor, who made them so.

Nor could thy fabric, Paul's, defend thee long,
Though thou wert sacred to thy Maker's praise:
Though made immortal by a poet's song;
And poets' songs the Theban walls could raise.

The daring flames peep'd in, and saw from far
The awful beauties of the sacred quire:
But, since it was profan'd by civil war,
Heaven thought it fit to have it purg'd by fire.

Now down the narrow streets it swiftly came,
And widely opening did on both sides prey:
This benefit we sadly owe the flame,
If only ruin must enlarge our way.

And now four days the sun had seen our woes:
Four nights the moon beheld th' incessant fire

It seem'd as if the stars more sickly rose,
And farther from the feverish north retire.

In th' empyrean heaven, the bless'd abode,
The Thrones and the Dominions prostrate lie,
Not daring to behold their angry God;
And a hush'd silence damps the tuneful sky.

At length th' Almighty cast a pitying eye,
And mercy softly touch'd his melting breast:
He saw the town's one half in rubbish lie,
And eager flames drive on to storm the rest.

A hollow crystal pyramid he takes,
In firmamental waters dipt above;
Of it a broad extinguisher he makes
And hoods the flames that to their quarry drove.

The vanquish'd fires withdraw from every place,
Or full with feeding sink into a sleep:
Each household genius shows again his face,
And from the hearths the little lares creep.

Our king this more than natural change beholds;
With sober joy his heart and eyes abound:
To the All-good his lifted hands he folds,
And thanks him low on his redeemed ground.

As when sharp frosts had long constrain'd the earth,
A kindly thaw unlocks it with mild rain;
And first the tender blade peeps up to birth,
And straight the green fields laugh with promis'd grain:

By such degrees the spreading gladness grew
In every heart which fear had froze before:
The standing streets with so much joy they view,
That with less grief the perish'd they deplore.

The father of the people open'd wide
His stores, and all the poor with plenty fed:
Thus God's anointed God's own place supplied,
And fill'd the empty with his daily bread.

This royal bounty brought its own reward,
And in their minds so deep did print the sense;
That if their ruins sadly they regard,
'Tis but with fear the sight might drive him thence.

But so may he live long, that town to sway,
Which by his auspice they will nobler make,
As he will hatch their ashes by his stay,
And not their humble ruins now forsake.

They have not lost their loyalty by fire;
Nor is their courage or their wealth so low,
That from his wars they poorly would retire,
Or beg the pity of a vanquish'd foe.

Not with more constancy the Jews of old,
By Cyrus from rewarded exile sent,
Their royal city did in dust behold,
Or with more vigour to rebuild it went.

The utmost malice of their stars is past,
And two dire comets, which have scourg'd the town

In their own plague and fire have breath'd the last,
Or dimly in their sinking sockets frown.

Now frequent trines the happier lights among,
And high rais'd Jove, from his dark prison freed,
Those weights took off that on his planet hung,
Will gloriously the new-laid work succeed.

Methinks already, from this chymic flame,
I see a city of more precious mould:
Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,
With silver pav'd, and all divine with gold.

Already labouring with a mighty fate,
She shakes the rubbish from her mounting brow,
And seems to have renew'd her charter's date,
Which heaven will to the death of time allow.

More great than human now, and more august,
Now deified she from her fires does rise:
Her widening streets on new foundations trust,
And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

Before, she like some shepherdess did show,
Who sat to bathe her by a river's side;
Not answering to her fame, but rude and low,
Nor taught the beauteous arts of modern pride.

Now, like a maiden queen, she will behold,
From her high turrets, hourly suitors come:
The east with incense, and the west with gold,
Will stand, like suppliants, to receive her doom.

The silver Thames, her own domestic flood,
Shall bear her vessels like a sweeping train;
And often wind, as of his mistress proud,
With longing eyes to meet her face again.

The wealthy Tagus, and the wealthier Rhine,
The glory of their towns no more shall boast,
And Seyne, that would with Belgian rivers join,
Shall find her lustre stain'd, and traffic lost.

The venturous merchant who design'd more far,
And touches on our hospitable shore,
Charm'd with the splendour of this northern star,
Shall here unlade him, and depart no more.

Our powerful navy shall no longer meet,
The wealth of France or Holland to invade:
The beauty of this town without a fleet,
From all the world shall vindicate her trade.

And, while this fam'd emporium we prepare,
The British ocean shall such triumphs boast,
That those, who now disdain our trade to share,
Shall rob like pirates on our wealthy coast.

Already we have conquer'd half the war,
And the less dangerous part is left behind:
Our trouble now is but to make them dare,
And not so great to vanquish as to find.

Thus to the eastern wealth through storms we go,
But now, the Cape once doubled, fear no more:
A constant trade-wind will securely blow,
And gently lay us on the spicy shore.

AN ESSAY UPON SATIRE,*

BY MR. DRYDEN AND THE EARL OF MULGRAVE.

How dull, and how insensible a beast
Is man, who yet would lord it o'er the rest?
Philosophers and poets vainly strove
In every age the lumpish mass to move:
But those were pedants, when compar'd with these,
Who know not only to instruct but please.
Poets alone found the delightful way,
Mysterious morals gently to convey
In charming numbers; so that as men grew
Pleas'd with their poems, they grew wiser too.
Satire has always shone among the rest,

* This piece was written in 1679, and handed about in manuscript some time before it made its appearance in print. It is supposed to have occasioned the beating Mr. Dryden received in Rose-street, Covent-garden, of which notice is taken in his life. The earl of Mulgrave's name has been always joined with Dryden's, as concerned in the composition; and that nobleman somewhere takes notice, that Dryden

Was prais'd and beaten for another's rhymes.

It is not improbable, that Rochester's character was drawn by his lordship, who held him in high contempt, after his behaving in a very dastardly manner when he challenged him. How, indeed, Lord Mulgrave came to subscribe to so disagreeable a picture of himself, is hard to divine. *D.*

And is the boldest way, if not the best,
To tell men freely of their foulest faults;
To laugh at their vain deeds, and vainer thoughts.
In satire too the wise took different ways,
To each deserving its peculiar praise.
Some did all folly with just sharpness blame,
Whilst others laugh'd and scorn'd them into shame.
But of these two, the last succeeded best,
As men aim rightest when they shoot in jest.
Yet, if we may presume to blame our guides,
And censure those, who censure all besides;
In other things they justly are preferr'd;
In this alone methinks the ancients err'd;
Against the grossest follies they declaim;
Hard they pursue, but hunt ignoble game.
Nothing is easier than such blots to hit,
And 'tis the talent of each vulgar wit:
Besides 'tis labour lost; for who would preach
Morals to Armstrong, or dull Aston teach?
'Tis being devout at play, wise at a ball,
Or bringing wit and friendship to Whitehall.
But with sharp eyes those nicer faults to find,
Which lie obscurely in the wisest mind;
That little speck which all the rest does spoil,
To wash off that would be a noble toil;
Beyond the loose writ libels of this age,
Or the forc'd scenes of our declining stage;
Above all censure too, each little wit
Will be so glad to see the greater hit;
Who judging better, though concern'd the most,

Of such correction will have cause to boast.
In such a satire all would seek a share,
And every fool will fancy he is there.
Old story-tellers too must pine and die,
To see their antiquated wit laid by;
Like her, who miss'd her name in a lampoon,
And grieved to find herself decay'd so soon.
No common coxcomb must be mention'd here:
Nor the dull train of dancing sparks appear:
Nor fluttering officers who never fight;
Of such a wretched rabble who would write?
Much less half wits: that's more against our rules:
For they are fops, the other are but fools.
Who would not be as silly as Dunbar?
As dull as Monmouth, rather than Sir Carr?
The cunning courtier should be slighted too,
Who with dull knavery makes so much ado;
Till the shrewd fool, by thriving too too fast,
Like Æsop's fox becomes a prey at last.
Nor shall the royal mistresses be nam'd,
Too ugly, or too easy to be blam'd;
With whom each rhyming fool keeps such a pother,
They are as common that way as the other:
Yet sauntering Charles between his beastly brace
Meets with dissembling still in either place,
Affected humour, or a painted face.

[61] *Nor shall the royal mistresses be nam'd*] About the time of the writing this poem, the king, if we may rely upon Bishop Burnet's authority, divided all his spare time between the Duchess of Portsmouth and Nell Gwin. *D.*

In loyal libels we have often told him,
How one has jilted him, the other sold him:
How that affects to laugh, how this to weep;
But who can rail so long as he can sleep?
Was ever prince by two at once misled,
False, foolish, old, ill-natur'd, and ill-bred?
Earnely and Aylesbury, with all that race
Of busy blockheads, shall have here no place;
At council set as foils on Danby's score,
To make that great false jewel shine the more;
Who all that while was thought exceeding wise,
Only for taking pains and telling lies.
But there's no meddling with such nauseous men;
Their very names have tired my lazy pen:
'Tis time to quit their company, and choose
Some fitter subject for a sharper muse.

First, let's behold the merriest man alive
Against his careless genius vainly strive;
Quit his dear ease, some deep design to lay,
'Gainst a set time, and then forget the day:
Yet he will laugh at his best friends, and be
Just as good company as Nokes and Lee.
But when he aims at reason or at rule,
He turns himself the best to ridicule.
Let him at business ne'er so earnest sit,
Show him but mirth, and bait that mirth with wit;
That shadow of a jest shall be enjoy'd,
Though he left all mankind to be destroy'd.

[89] *As Nokes and Lee*] These were two celebrated comedians in Charles the Second's reign. *D.*

So cat transform'd sat gravely and demure,
Till mouse appear'd, and thought himself secure;
But soon the lady had him in her eye,
And from her friend did just as oddly fly.
Reaching above our nature does no good;
We must fall back to our old flesh and blood;
As by our little Machiavel we find
That nimblest creature of the busy kind,
His limbs are crippled, and his body shakes;
Yet his hard mind, which all this bustle makes,
No pity of its poor companion takes.
What gravity can hold from laughing out,
To see him drag his feeble legs about,
Like hounds ill-coupled? Jowler lugs him still
Through hedges, ditches, and through all that's ill.
'Twere crime in any man but him alone,
To use a body so, though 'tis one's own:
Yet this false comfort never gives him o'er,
That whilst he creeps his vigorous thoughts can soar:
Alas! that soaring to those few that know,
Is but a busy groveling here below.
So men in rapture think they mount the sky,
Whilst on the ground th' intranced wretches lie:
So modern fops have fancied they could fly.
As the new earl with parts deserving praise,
And wit enough to laugh at his own ways;
Yet loses all soft days and sensual nights,
Kind nature checks, and kinder fortune slights;
Striving against his quiet all he can,
For the fine notion of a busy man.

And what is that at best, but one, whose mind
Is made to tire himself and all mankind?
For Ireland he would go; faith, let him reign;
For if some odd fantastic lord would fain
Carry in trunks, and all my drudgery do,
I'll not only pay him, but admire him too.
But is there any other beast that lives,
Who his own harm so wittingly contrives?
Will any dog that has his teeth and stones
Refinedly leave his bitches and his bones,
To turn a wheel? and bark to be employ'd,
While Venus is by rival dogs enjoy'd?
Yet this fond man, to get a statesman's name,
Forfeits his friends, his freedom, and his fame.
Though satire nicely writ with humour stings
But those who merit praise in other things;
Yet we must needs this one exception make,
And break our rules for silly Tropos' sake;
Who was too much despis'd to be accus'd,
And therefore scarce deserves to be abus'd;
Rais'd only by his mercenary tongue,
For railing smoothly, and for reasoning wrong.
As boys on holidays let loose to play,
Lay waggish traps for girls that pass that way;
Then shout to see in dirt and deep distress
Some silly cit in her flower'd foolish dress:
So have I mighty satisfaction found,
To see his tinsel reason on the ground:
To see the florid fool despis'd, and know it,
By some who scarce have words enough to show it:

For sense sits silent, and condemns for weaker
The finer, nay sometimes the wittiest speaker:
But 'tis prodigious so much eloquence
Should be acquired by such little sense;
For words and wit did anciently agree,
And Tully was no fool, though this man be:
At bar abusive, on the bench unable,
Knave on the woolsack, fop at council table.
These are the grievances of such fools as would
Be rather wise than honest, great than good.

Some other kind of wits must be made known,
Whose harmless errors hurt themselves alone;
Excess of luxury they think can please,
And laziness call loving of their ease:
To live dissolv'd in pleasures still they feign,
Though their whole life's but intermitting pain:
So much of surfeits, headaches, claps are seen,
We scarce perceive the little time between:
Well-meaning men who make this gross mistake,
And pleasure lose only for pleasure's sake;
Each pleasure has its price, and when we pay
Too much of pain, we squander life away.

Thus Dorset, purring like a thoughtful cat,
Married, but wiser puss ne'er thought of that:

178 *Thus Dorset, purring like,* &c.] Charles, Earl of Dorset, about this time forty years of age, was one of the best bred men of his time. He was a lord of the bed-chamber, and sent several times with compliments, or on short embassies, to France, for the king could not bear to be long without him: he was a most munificent patron; learning an genius were sure of his protection; and when our author was

And first he worried her with railing rhyme, 180
Like Pembroke's mastiffs at his kindest time;

deprived of the bays, he allowed him the laureat's annual stipend out of his own private purse. Arthur Mainwaring, Mr. Prior, and many other men of abilities, owed to him their being advanced and provided for. Nor was he less brave than polite and learned; for he attended the Duke of York as a volunteer in the first Dutch war, and by his coolness, courage, and conduct, showed himself a worthy representative of his many illustrious ancestors. The night before the famous battle, in which the Dutch Admiral Opdam was blown up, he made a celebrated song, with the greatest composure, beginning,

To you fair ladies now at land,
We men at sea indite, &c.

No man had more ease or good humour; his conversation was refined and sprightly: he had studied books and men deeply, and to good purpose; he was an excellent critic, and good poet, with a strong turn to satire, for which he is thus highly complimented in the State Poems, vol. i. p. 200.

'Dorset writes satire too, and writes so well,
O great Apollo! let him still rebel.
Pardon a muse which does, like his, excel,
Pardon a muse which does, with art, support
Some drowsy wit in our unthinking court.'

He wrote with severity, but that severity was always justly pointed, and Lord Rochester calls him

'The best good man, with the worst natur'd muse.'

His first wife, the Countess Dowager of Falmouth, had proved a barren wife. Of her having been a teeming widow I am ignorant. His second wife, whom he married in 1685, was daughter to the Earl of Northampton, and mother to the present Duke of Dorset. He was principally concerned in bringing about the revolution; was lord-chamberlain to King William and Queen Mary; chosen a knight of the garter in

Then for one night sold all his slavish life,
A teeming widow, but a barren wife;
Swell'd by contact of such a fulsome toad,
He lugg'd about the matrimonial load;
Till fortune, blindly kind as well as he,
Has ill restor'd him to his liberty;
Which he would use in his old sneaking way,
Drinking all night and dozing all the day;
Dull as Ned Howard, whom his brisker times
Had fam'd for dulness in malicious rhymes.
Mulgrave had much ado to scape the snare,

1691, and several times appointed one of the regents, when the affairs of Europe demanded the absence of the king. He died at Bath in 1706, aged 69, lamented by every class of people, and the most opposite parties. Mr. Pope gives him these lines:

'Dorset, the grace of courts, the muse's pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, died.' *D.*

190 *Dull as Ned Howard, whom his brisker times*
Had fam'd for dulness in malicious rhymes]

Edward Howard, Esq. a gentleman of the Berkshire family, consequently related to Sir Robert Howard. He wrote four plays, called, 1st. The Man of Newmarket, a comedy. 2nd. Six Days' Adventure; or, The New Utopia, a comedy. 3rd. The Usurper, a tragedy. 4th. Women's Conquest, a tragi-comedy: but none of them succeeded on the stage, nor procured him any reputation. He also published an epic poem, called the British Princes, for which he was severely ridiculed by all the wits of his age: Lord Rochester, Lord Dorset, Mr. Waller, the Duke of Buckingham, Dr. Spratt, Lord Vaughan, published lampoons upon it, most of them printed in the six volumes of Miscellanies published by Dryden. *D.*

Though learn'd in all those arts that cheat the fair:
For after all his vulgar marriage mocks,
With beauty dazzled, Numps was in the stocks;
Deluded parents dried their weeping eyes,
To see him catch his tartar for his prize:
Th' impatient town waited the wish'd-for change,
And cuckolds smil'd in hopes of sweet revenge;
Till Petworth plot made us with sorrow see,
As his estate, his person too was free:
Him no soft thoughts, no gratitude could move;
To gold he fled from beauty and from love;
Yet failing there he keeps his freedom still,
Forc'd to live happily against his will:
'Tis not his fault, if too much wealth and power
Break not his boasted quiet every hour.
And little Sid, for simile renown'd,
Pleasure has always sought but never found:

208 *And little Sid, for simile renown'd,*
Pleasure has always sought but never found]

This Sidney, brother of Algernon Sidney and the Earl of Leicester, was rather a man of pleasure than of business; his talents were great, but his indolence was greater; his appearance was graceful; he was a favourite with the ladies, had a turn for intrigue, and was of a disposition exactly fitted to Charles's court, easy, affable, and insinuating; free from any guile, and a friend to mankind. In 1679 he went envoy to the Hague, where he contracted an intimacy with the Prince of Orange, whose friends he heartily assisted in raising him to the throne, being himself a messenger from England to Holland upon that very business in 1688. He was raised to the dignity of Lord Sidney, and Earl of Rumney, in 1688; declared secretary of state, master of the ordnance,

Though all his thoughts on wine and women fall,
His are so bad, sure he ne'er thinks at all.
The flesh he lives upon is rank and strong,
His meat and mistresses are kept too long.
But sure we all mistake this pious man,
Who mortifies his person all he can:
What we uncharitably take for sin,
Are only rules of this odd capuchin;
For never hermit under grave pretence
Has liv'd more contrary to common sense;
And 'tis a miracle we may suppose,
No nastiness offends his skilful nose;
Which from all stink can with peculiar art
Extract perfume and essence from a f—t:
Expecting supper is his great delight;
He toils all day but to be drunk at night;
Then o'er his cups this night-bird chirping sits,
Till he takes Hewet and Jack Hall for wits.
  Rochester I despise for want of wit,
Though thought to have a tail and cloven feet;

and lord lieutenant of Ireland in 1689; and was removed from the latter post in 1693, it being thought that he held the reins of power with too slack a hand. *D.*

227 *Till he takes Hewet and Jack Hall for wits*] Sir George Hewit, a man of quality, famous for gallantry, and often named in the State Poems. Sir George Etheredge intended for him the celebrated character of Sir Fopling Flutter.

'Scarce will there greater grief pierce every heart,
Should Sir George Hewit, or Sir Carr, depart.
Had it not better been, than thus to roam,
To stay and tie the cravat string at home;

For while he mischief means to all mankind,
Himself alone the ill effects does find:
And so like witches justly suffers shame,
Whose harmless malice is so much the same.
False are his words, affected is his wit;
So often he does aim, so seldom hit;
To every face he cringes while he speaks,
But when the back is turn'd the head he breaks:
Mean in each action, lewd in every limb,
Manners themselves are mischievous in him:
A proof that chance alone makes every creature
A very Killigrew without good nature.

To strut, look big, shake pantaloon, and swear,
With Hewit, dammee, there's no action there.'
State Poems, vol. i. p. 155.

The above lines are addressed by Rochester to Lord Mulgrave, when bound for Tangier.

Jack Hall, a courtier, whom I take to be the same with Uzza in the second part of Absalom and Achitophel, is thus mentioned in the State Poems, vol. ii. p. 135:

' Jack Hall ———— left town,
But first writ something he dare own,
Of prologue lawfully begotten,
And full nine months maturely thought on:
Born with hard labour, and much pain,
Ously was Dr. Chamberlain.
At length from stuff and rubbish pick'd,
As bears' cubs into shape are lick'd,
When Wharton, Etherege, and Soame,
To give it their last strokes were come,
Those critics differ'd in their doom.
Yet Swan says, he admir'd it 'scap'd,
Since 'twas Jack Hall's without being clapp'd.'

Swan was a notorious punster. *D.*

241 *A very Killigrew without good nature*] Thomas Killi-

For what a Bessus has he always liv'd,
And his own kickings notably contriv'd?
For, there's the folly that's still mix'd with fear,
Cowards more blows than any hero bear;
Of fighting sparks some may their pleasures say,
But 'tis a bolder thing to run away:
The world may well forgive him all his ill,
For every fault does prove his penance still:
Falsely he falls into some dangerous noose,
And then as meanly labours to get loose;

grew, of whom we hear daily so many pleasant stories related, had good natural parts, but no regular education. He was brother to Sir William Killigrew, vice-chamberlain to King Charles the Second's queen; had been some time page of honour to King Charles I. and was, after the restoration, many years master of the revels, and groom of the chamber to King Charles II., in whose exile he shared, being his resident at Venice in 1651. During his travels abroad he wrote several plays, none of which are much talked of. His itch of writing, and his character as a wit and companion, occasioned this distich from Sir John Denham,

'Had Cowley ne'er spoke, Killigrew ne'er writ,
Combin'd in one they'd made a matchless wit.'

The same knight wrote a ballad on him.

Killigrew was a most facetious companion; his wit was lively and spirited; and he had a manner of saying the bitterest things, without provoking resentment; he tickled you while he made you smart, and you overlooked the pain, charmed by the pleasure. He died at Whitehall in March 1682, aged seventy-one, bewailed by his friends, and truly wept for by the poor. *D.*

242 *For what a Bessus has he always lived*] Bessus is a remarkable cowardly character in Beaumont and Fletcher. *D.*

A life so infamous is better quitting,
Spent in base injury and low submitting.
I'd like to have left out his poetry;
Forgot by all almost as well as me.
Sometimes he has some humour, never wit,
And if it rarely, very rarely, hit,
'Tis under so much nasty rubbish laid,
To find it out's the cinder woman's trade;
Who for the wretched remnants of a fire
Must toil all day in ashes and in mire.
So lewdly dull his idle works appear,
The wretched texts deserve no comments here;
Where one poor thought sometimes, left all alone,
For a whole page of dulness must atone.

How vain a thing is man, and how unwise!
E'en he, who would himself the most despise!
I, who so wise and humble seem to be,
Now my own vanity and pride can't see,
While the world's nonsense is so sharply shown,
We pull down others but to raise our own;
That we may angels seem, we paint them elves,
And are but satires to set up ourselves.
I, who have all this while been finding fault,
E'en with my master, who first satire taught;
And did by that describe the task so hard,
It seems stupendous and above reward!
Now labour with unequal force to climb
That lofty hill, unreach'd by former time:
'Tis just that I should to the bottom fall,
Learn to write well, or not to write at all.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL;

PART I.

——— Si propiùs stes
Te capiet magis———

A POEM, PUBLISHED 1681.

THE OCCASION OF IT EXPLAINED.

THE Earl of Shaftesbury seemed bent upon the ruin of the Duke of York. It was mostly through his influence in both houses, that those infamous witnesses, Oates, Tongue, Bedloe, &c., were so strenuously encouraged, and the Popish plot, if not schemed by him, was at least by him cherished and supported. He had been heard to say with some exultation, *I wont pretend to pronounce who started the game, but I am sure I have had the full hunting.* At this day that plot appears, to impartial and discerning eyes, to have been a forgery contrived to inflame the minds of the people against popery, a religion now professed by the duke, that the bill for excluding him from the throne might meet with more countenance and greater certainty of success; and it went very near having the desired effect.

The indiscreet zeal and imprudent conduct of the Roman Catholics, for some time past, had given too much room for suspicion; they having often openly, and in defiance of the established laws of the kingdom, shown a thorough contempt for the established religion of their country, propagated as much as possible their own tenets, loudly triumphed in their progress, and daily acquisition of proselytes among all ranks of people, without the least secrecy or caution. Hence was the nation ripe for alarm: when given, it spread like wildfire; and the Duke of York, as head of the party at which it was aimed, was obliged to withdraw to Brussels to avoid the impending storm.

The king being some time after taken ill, produced his highness's sudden return, before his enemies, and those in

the opposition to the court measures, could provide for his reception; so that their schemes were thus for a while disconcerted. Lest his presence might revive commotion, he returned again to Brussels, and was then permitted (previously) to retire to Scotland, having received the strongest assurances of his brother's affection and resolution to secure him and his heirs the succession. He had before this the satisfaction of seeing the turbulent Earl of Shaftesbury removed from his seat and precedence in the privy-council, as well as all share in the ministry; and now prevailed to have the Duke of Monmouth dismissed from all his posts, and sent into Holland.

Shaftesbury's views were to lift Monmouth to the throne, whose weaknesses he knew he could so effectually manage, as to have the reins of government in that case in his own hands. Monmouth was the eldest of the king's sons, by whom he was tenderly beloved. His mother was one Mrs. Lucy Walters, otherwise Barlow, a Pembrokeshire woman, who bore him at Rotterdam in 1649, and between whom and his majesty it was artfully reported, there had passed a contract of marriage. This report was narrowly examined into, and proved false, to the full satisfaction of the privy-council, and of the people in general, though Shaftesbury did all in his power to support and establish a belief of its reality. The youth was educated at Paris under the queen-mother, and brought over to England in 1662: soon after which time he was created Duke of Orkney in Scotland, and Monmouth in England, or rather Wales; chosen a knight of the garter; appointed master of horse to his majesty, general of the land forces, colonel of the life-guard of horse, lord-lieutenant of the East Riding of Yorkshire, governor of Kingston-upon-Hull, chief justice in eyre on the south of the river Trent, lord-chamberlain of Scotland, and Duke of Buccleugh, in right of his wife, who was daughter and heiress to a noble and wealthy earl, bearing that name; but he lost all those places of honour and fortune, together with his royal father's favour, by the insinuation and art of Shaftesbury, who poisoned him with illegal and ambitious notions, that ended in his destruction.

The partizans of this earl, and other malecontents, had long pointed out his Grace as a proper successor to the crown, instead of the Duke of York, in case of the king's demise; and he began to believe that he had a real right to be so. At the instigation of his old friend Shaftesbury, he returned to England without his father's consent, who would

not see him; and, instead of obeying the royal mandate to retire again, he and Shaftesbury jointly made a pompous parade through several counties in the west and north of England, scattering the seeds of discord and disaffection; so that their designs seemed to be levelled against the government, and a tempest was gathering at a distance, not unlike that which swept the royal martyr from his throne and life. Many people, who would not otherwise have taken part with the court, shuddering when they looked back upon the scenes of anarchy and confusion, that had followed that melancholy catastrophe, in order to prevent the return of a similar storm, attached themselves to the king and the Duke of York; and the latter returned to court, where he kept his ground.

The kingdom was now in a high fermentation; the murmurs of each party broke out into altercation, and declamatory abuse. Every day produced new libels and disloyal pamphlets. To answer and expose them, their partizans and abettors, several authors were retained by authority, but none came up to the purpose so well as Sir Roger l'Estrange, in the Observator; and the poet laureat, in the poem under inspection, the elegance and severity of which raised his character prodigiously, and showed the proceedings of Shaftesbury and his followers in a most severe light. These writings, according to Echard, in a great measure stemmed the tide of a popular current, that might have otherwise immersed the nation in ruin. His Grace the Duke of Monmouth afterwards engaged in the Ryehouse Plot, and a reward was offered for the taking him, both by his father and Lewis XIV. whether in England or France. He obtained his pardon both of the king and duke, by two very submissive, nay abject, letters; and being admitted to the royal presence, seemed extremely sorry for his past offences, confessed his having engaged in a design for seizing the king's guards, and changing the government, but denied having any knowledge of a scheme for assassinating either his father or uncle, which it seems was set on foot by the inferior ministers of this conspiracy.

Presuming, however, upon the king's paternal affection, he soon recanted his confession, and consorted with his old followers; so that the king forbid him the court, and he retired to Holland, from whence he returned in 1685, raised a rebellion against his uncle, then on the throne, caused himself to be proclaimed king, and being defeated and taken prisoner, was beheaded on Tower-hill, in his thirty-sixth year. *D.*

TO THE READER.

'Tis not my intention to make an apology for my poem: some will think it needs no excuse, and others will receive none. The design I am sure is honest; but he who draws his pen for one party must expect to make enemies of the other. For wit and fool are consequents of whig and tory;* and every man is a knave or an ass to the contrary side. There is a treasury of merits in the fanatic church, as well as in the popish; and a pennyworth to be had of saintship, honesty, and poetry, for the lewd, the factious, and the blockheads; but the longest chapter in Deuteronomy has not curses enough for an anti-Bromingham. My comfort is, their manifest prejudice to my cause will render their judgment of less authority against me. Yet if a poem have a genius, it will force its own reception in the world; for there's a sweetness in good verse, which tickles even while it hurts, and no man can be heartily angry with him who pleases him against his will. The commendation of adversaries is the greatest triumph of a writer, because it never comes unless extorted. But I can be satisfied on more easy terms: if I happen to please the more moderate sort, I shall be sure of an honest party, and, in all probability, of the best judges: for the least concerned are commonly the least corrupt. And I confess I have laid in for those, by rebating the satire (where justice would allow it) from carrying too sharp an edge. They who can criticise so weakly, as to imagine I have done my worst, may be convinced, at their own cost, that I can write severely with more ease than I can gently. I have but laughed at some men's follies, when I could have declaimed against their vices; and other men's virtues I have commended, as freely as I have taxed their crimes. And now, if you are a malicious reader, I expect you should return upon me that I affect to be thought more impartial than I am. But if men are not to be judged by their professions, God forgive you commonwealth's men for professing so plausibly for the government. You cannot be so unconscionable as to charge me for not subscribing of my name;

* It was now that the party distinctions of whig and tory were first adopted; the courtiers were deridingly compared to the Irish banditti, who were called tories; and they likened their opponents to whigs, a denomination of reproach, formerly given the Scotch covenanters, who were supposed to live on a poor kind of buttermilk so called. These names still distinguish contending parties in England, though strangely varied from their original application. *D.*

for that would reflect too grossly upon your own party, who never dare, though they have the advantage of a jury to secure them. If you like not my poem, the fault may, possibly, be in my writing (though 'tis hard for an author to judge against himself); but, more probably, 'tis in your morals, which cannot bear the truth of it. The violent, on both sides, will condemn the character of Absalom, as either too favourably or too hardly drawn. But they are not the violent whom I desire to please. The fault on the right hand is to extenuate, palliate, and indulge; and to confess freely, I have endeavoured to commit it. Besides the respect which I owe his birth, I have a greater for his heroic virtues; and David himself could not be more tender of the young man's life than I would be of his reputation. But since the most excellent natures are always the most easy, and, as being such, are the soonest perverted by ill counsels, especially when baited with fame and glory; 'tis no more a wonder that he withstood not the temptations of Achitophel, than it was for Adam not to have resisted the two devils, the serpent and the woman. The conclusion of the story I purposely forbore to prosecute, because I could not obtain from myself to show Absalom unfortunate. The frame of it was cut out but for a picture to the waist, and if the draught be so far true, 'tis as much as I designed.

Were I the inventor, who am only the historian, I should certainly conclude the piece with the reconcilement of Absalom to David. And who knows but this may come to pass? Things were not brought to an extremity where I left the story; there seems yet to be room left for a composure; hereafter there may be only for pity. I have not so much as an uncharitable wish against Achitophel, but am content to be accused of a good-natured error, and to hope with Origen, that the devil himself may at last be saved. For which reason, in this poem, he is neither brought to set his house in order, nor to dispose of his person afterwards as he in wisdom shall think fit. God is infinitely merciful; and his vicegerent is only not so, because he is not infinite.

The true end of satire is the amendment of vices by correction. And he, who writes honestly, is no more an enemy to the offender, than the physician to the patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to an inveterate disease; for those are only in order to prevent the chirurgeon's work of an *Ense recidendum*, which I wish not to my very enemies. To conclude all; if the body politic have any analogy to the natural, in my weak judgment, an act of oblivion were as necessary in a hot distempered state, as an opiate would be in a raging fever.

ABSALOM* AND ACHITOPHEL.

In pious times ere priestcraft did begin,
Before polygamy was made a sin;
When man on many multiplied his kind,
Ere one to one was cursedly confined;
When nature prompted, and no law denied
Promiscuous use of concubine and bride;
Then Israel's monarch after heaven's own heart,
His vigorous warmth did variously impart
To wives and slaves; and wide as his command,
Scatter'd his Maker's image through the land.
Michal, of royal blood, the crown did wear;
A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care:
Not so the rest; for several mothers bore
To god-like David several sons before.
But since like slaves his bed they did ascend,
No true succession could their seed attend.
Of all this numerous progeny was none
So beautiful, so brave, as Absalom:
Whether inspir'd by some diviner lust,

* Among the many answers to, and remarks on, this poem, the following are curious:—'Towser the Second, a Bull-dog; or, a short Reply to Absalon and Achitophel,' folio, half-sheet, London, 1681. 'Absalon's IX. Worthies,' a Poem, folio, half-sheet, no date. 'Poetical Reflections on Absalom and Achitophel,' folio, s. d. 'Absalom Senior,' a Poem, folio, 1682. *T.*

His father got him with a greater gust:
Or that his conscious destiny made way,
By manly beauty to imperial sway.
Early in foreign fields he won renown,
With kings and states allied to Israel's crown:
In peace the thoughts of war he could remove,
And seem'd as he were only born for love.
Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,
In him alone 'twas natural to please:
His motions all accompanied with grace;
And paradise was open'd in his face.
With secret joy indulgent David view'd
His youthful image in his son renew'd:
To all his wishes nothing he denied;
And made the charming Annabel his bride.
What faults he had, (for who from faults is free?)
His father could not, or he would not see.
Some warm excesses which the law forbore,
Were constru'd youth that purg'd by boiling o'er,
And Amnon's murder by a specious name,
Was call'd a just revenge for injur'd fame.
Thus prais'd and lov'd, the noble youth remain'd,
While David, undisturb'd, in Sion reign'd.

[30] *And paradise was open'd in his face*] Pope's Eloisa, in her compliment to Abelard on his founding the Paraclete, is certainly indebted to this personal description; and the ingenuity of the poet, in the local adaptation, is truly admirable:

'You rais'd these hallow'd walls; the desart smil'd,
And paradise was open'd in the wild.' *T.*

But life can never be sincerely blest;
Heaven punishes the bad, and proves the best.
The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murmuring race,
As ever tried the extent and stretch of grace;
God's pamper'd people, whom debauch'd with ease,
No king could govern, nor no God could please;
(Gods they had tried of every shape and size,
That godsmiths could produce, or priests devise:)
These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
Began to dream they wanted liberty;
And when no rule, no precedent was found,
Of men, by laws less circumscrib'd and bound;
They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
And thought that all but savages were slaves.
They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow,
Made foolish Ishbosheth the crown forego;
Who banish'd David did from Hebron bring,
And with a general shout proclaim'd him king:
Those very Jews, who, at their very best,
Their humour more than loyalty exprest,
Now wonder'd why so long they had obey'd
An idol monarch, which their hands had made;
Thought they might ruin him they could create,
Or melt him to that golden calf a state.

[51] *These Adam-wits*, &c.] Persons discontented in happy circumstances are not unluckily called *Adam-wits*, from a remembrance of Adam's weakness in Paradise, who, aiming at being happier than the happiest, by persuasion of Eve, eat of the forbidden fruit, and thereby forfeited the divine favour, and was excluded the garden of Eden. *D.*

But these were random bolts: no form'd design,
Nor interest made the factious crowd to join:
The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
Well knew the value of a peaceful reign;
And, looking backward with a wise affright,
Saw seams of wounds dishonest to the sight:
In contemplation of whose ugly scars
They curst the memory of civil wars.
The moderate sort of men thus qualified,
Inclined the balance to the better side;
And David's mildness managed it so well,
The bad found no occasion to rebel.
But when to sin our bias'd nature leans,
The careful devil is still at hand with means;
And providently pimps for ill desires:
The good old cause revived a plot requires.
Plots, true or false, are necessary things,
To raise up commonwealths, and ruin kings.
The inhabitants of old Jerusalem
Were Jebusites; the town so call'd from them;
And theirs the native right ———
But when the chosen people grew more strong,
The rightful cause at length became the wrong;
And every loss the men of Jebus bore,
They still were thought God's enemies the more.
Thus worn or weaken'd, well or ill content,
Submit they must to David's government:
Impoverish'd and deprived of all command,
Their taxes doubled as they lost their land;
And what was harder yet to flesh and blood,

Their gods disgraced, and burnt like common wood.
This set the heathen priesthood in a flame;
For priests of all religions are the same.
Of whatsoe'er descent their godhead be,
Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,
In his defence his servants are as bold,
As if he had been born of beaten gold.
The Jewish rabbins, though their enemies,
In this conclude them honest men and wise:
For 'twas their duty all the learned think,
T' espouse his cause, by whom they eat and drink.
From hence began that plot, the nation's curse,
Bad in itself, but represented worse;
Rais'd in extremes, and in extremes decried;
With oaths affirm'd, with dying vows denied;
Not weigh'd nor winnow'd by the multitude;
But swallow'd in the mass, unchew'd and crude.
Some truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with lies,
To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise.
Succeeding times did equal folly call,
Believing nothing, or believing all.
Th' Egyptian rites the Jebusites embrac'd;
Where gods were recommended by their taste.
Such savoury deities must needs be good,
As served at once for worship and for food.
By force they could not introduce these gods;
For ten to one in former days was odds.
So fraud was used, the sacrificer's trade:
Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade.

Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews,
And rak'd for converts even the court and stews:
Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,
Because the fleece accompanies the flock.
Some thought they God's anointed meant to slay
By guns, invented since full many a day:
Our author swears it not; but who can know
How far the devil and Jebusites may go?
This plot, which fail'd for want of common sense,
Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence:
For as when raging fevers boil the blood,
The standing lake soon floats into a flood,
And every hostile humour, which before
Slept quiet in its channels, bubbles o'er;
So several factions from this first ferment
Work up to foam, and threat the government.
Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
Oppos'd the power to which they could not rise.
Some had in courts been great, and thrown from thence,
Like fiends were harden'd in impenitence.
Some, by their monarch's fatal mercy, grown
From pardon'd rebels kinsmen to the throne,
Were rais'd in power and public office high;
Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.
Of these the false Achitophel was first;

150 *Of these the false*] This is the introduction of the chief hero of this piece, the celebrated Earl of Shaftesbury, under the name of Achitophel. A man, insinuating, imposing in

A name to all succeeding ages curst:
For close designs, and crooked councils fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfix'd in principles and place;

private, eloquent, daring in public, full of resources in both; who had been bred up in the schools of civil commotion, in the long parliament, in Cromwell's revolutions, and in those which followed Cromwell's death; and who, from that education, knew well the power of popular rumours, at times when popular passions are in ferment; framed the fiction of the popish plot in the year 1678, in order to bury the Duke, and perhaps the King, under the weight of the national fear and hatred of popery. Shaftesbury was stimulated too by offences both given and received; for the King having said to him, 'Shaftesbury, thou art the greatest rogue in the kingdom,' he answered, bowing, 'Of a subject, Sir, I believe I am.' And the Duke rated him in passionate terms for one of his speeches in parliament. 'I am glad,' said he, 'your Royal Highness has not called me papist and coward.' The account of this plot, in which was involved the assassination of Charles and his brother, an invasion, the conflagration of the city, and a massacre of the protestants, was calculated, in its great lines, to gain the attention of the higher ranks of the nation, and, by the familiarity and detail of its circumstances, to catch the credulity of the meanest of the populace. By making the Duke one of the objects of the pretended assassination, it prevented the suspicion of its being directed against him; and by accusing the Queen, whom the King did not love, it gave a chance for separating the interests of the brothers. The information, as soon as given, flew instantly abroad. Even the marvellousness of the story gave credit to what it was almost impossible to believe human fiction could have invented. Accident after accident, arising in a manner unparalleled in history, concurred to maintain the delusion. Coleman's letters were seized, which disco-

In power unpleas'd, impatient of disgrace: 155
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy-body to decay,
And o'er inform'd the tenement of clay.

vered that the Duke had been carrying on a correspondence with France, against the religion of his country, and its interests. Danby's correspondence with France for money to the King was betrayed, which made Charles a sharer in his brother's disgrace; but above all, the murder of Godfrey, who, in his office of a magistrate, had made public the plot, caused almost every protestant to imagine he felt the dagger in his breast. Shaftesbury knew too well the nature of the human mind, not to improve upon this last accident. He suggested to his faction to bring the eye in aid of the imagination, in order to complete the terror of the people. The dead body, ghastly, and with the sword fixed in it, and lying on a bier, was exposed during two days in the public street. It was carried in procession through the city of London to the grave, as the remains of a martyr to the protestant religion; seventy-two clergymen walking before, near a thousand persons of condition behind, innumerable crowds in a long silent order, an expression of passion more dangerous than that of clamour and confusion, bringing up the rear.

Such is the character given by my amiable and ingenious friend, Sir John Dalrymple, of this celebrated politician; which character having been censured as unjust and severe, the author, with that candour and liberality that endears him to his acquaintance, made the following apology in his second volume of Memoirs, p. 325: 'It has been a misfortune to Lord Shaftesbury's memory, that every thing has been written against him, and nothing for him; upon which account, I am happy to hear, that his family have thoughts of endeavouring to vindicate his memory in public. Far from the intention to injure it, I flatter myself that the papers published in this Appendix will set his character, in several respects, in

A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleas'd with the danger, when the waves went high
He sought the storms; but for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.

a new light in the world. They will show that he had no hand in the Duchess of Orleans's treaty, made at Dover for the interests of popery; that Charles first broke the ties of honour with him, by deceiving and betraying him into the second treaty with France, in the year 1671, while he concealed from him the first, which had been made in the year 1670; and that Shaftesbury took no money from France, at a time when most of his friends of the popular party were doing it.'

It is painful and difficult to bring one's mind to conceive, that a man, totally profligate and unprincipled, could have been so much respected and beloved, as he was, by such a man as Mr. Locke, and could have been one of the most upright, able, irreproachable, popular Lord Chancellors, that ever adorned that high station, to which Dryden himself bears testimony in the strongest manner, in six fine lines, beginning line 186. It is to be lamented that Locke never finished the Memoirs he began of Lord Shaftesbury's Life. A very curious and long extract is given from Locke's papers, by Le Clerc, in the seventh volume of the Bibliotheque Choisie, from page 147 to page 169, well worthy the attentive perusal of the impartial reader. Locke dwells much on the acuteness of his wit, and his deep and close penetration into the human heart; of which, among others, he gives a remarkable instance. Having dined at Lord Clarendon's with Lord Southampton, he said, on their return, to the latter, 'Miss Anne Hyde, whom we have just left, is certainly married to one of the royal brothers. A certain secret respect, a studied and suppressed attention and complaisance, paid to her by the mother, in her voice, looks, and gestures, and even in the manner in which she offered her every thing at the table, renders this suspicion of mine indisputable.' Lord South-

Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won,
To that unfeather'd two-legg'd thing, a son;
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolv'd to ruin or to rule the state.
To compass this the triple bond he broke;

ampton laughed at the time at the improbability of this conjecture, but was soon afterwards convinced of its truth. In these Memoirs is preserved a spirited letter to the Duke of York from Shaftesbury, when he was confined in the tower, in the year 1676. A saying of this sharp-sighted nobleman deserves to be remembered: 'That wisdom lay in the heart, not in the head; and that it was not the want of knowledge, but the perverseness of the will, that filled men's actions with folly, and their lives with disorder.' *Dr. J. W.*

175 *The triple bond he broke*] In the year 1667, a triple alliance was entered into between England, Sweden, and Holland, which was dissolved by the second Dutch war, to which, and a closer connexion with France, Lord Shaftesbury contributed his advice, and thereby

Fitted Israel for a foreign yoke.

The remaining lines allude to his having changed his opinion, when he found it unpopular, as we have observed above, down to

Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge,
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge. *D.*

The pillars of the public safety shook;
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke:
Then seiz'd with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves in factious times,
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's will?
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own?
Yet fame deserv'd no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abethdin
With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean,
Unbrib'd, unsought, the wretched to redress;
Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.
Oh! had he been content to serve the crown,
With virtues only proper to the gown;
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cockle, that oppress'd the noble seed;
David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
And heaven had wanted one immortal song.

179 *Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name*] The first edition reads: *Assum'd a patron's all-atoning name.* This last variation, evidently a typographical error, seems to have been discovered and corrected while the poem was going through the press. There is, in the library of Sion college, a copy of the first edition, which reads: *Assum'd* a *patriot's* all-atoning name. * *

180—191 These twelve lines were added in the second edition. * *

But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
Achitophel, grown weary to possess
A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
Disdain'd the golden fruit to gather free,
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
Now, manifest of crimes contriv'd long since,
He stood at bold defiance with his prince;
Held up the buckler of the people's cause
Against the crown, and skulk'd behind the laws.
The wish'd occasion of the plot he takes;
Some circumstances finds, but more he makes.
By buzzing emissaries fills the ears
Of listening crowds with jealousies and fears
Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
And proves the king himself a Jebusite.
Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well
Were strong with people easy to rebel.
For, govern'd by the moon, the giddy Jews
Tread the same track when she the prime renews;

205 *He stood at bold defiance*] The particular circumstance that drove Shaftesbury into a sudden opposition to the court was, that the king, alarmed at the strong remonstrances of the commons against popery and a dispensing power, and breaking with his own hands the seal affixed to the declaration of indulgence, and granting all the commons desired, was guilty himself of a breach of promise to his new ministers, and exposed them to the vengeance of the people. To escape which vengeance, the *Cabal* made the same sudden turn with their master; so that on this occasion, Shaftesbury said, 'The prince who forsook himself deserved to be forsaken.'

Dr. J. W.

And once in twenty years, their scribes record,
By natural instinct they change their lord.
Achitophel still wants a chief, and none
Was found so fit as warlike Absalon.
Not that he wish'd his greatness to create,
For politicians neither love nor hate:
But, for he knew his title not allow'd,
Would keep him still depending on the crowd:
That kingly power, thus ebbing out, might be
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
Him he attempts with studied arts to please,
And sheds his venom in such words as these.
Auspicious prince, at whose nativity
Some royal planet rul'd the southern sky;
Thy longing country's darling and desire;
Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire:
Their second Moses, whose extended wand
Divides the seas, and shows the promis'd land:
Whose dawning day in every distant age
Has exercis'd the sacred prophet's rage:
The people's prayer, the glad diviner's theme,
The young men's vision, and the old men's dream!
Thee, Saviour, thee the nation's vows confess,
And, never satisfied with seeing, bless:
Swift unbespoken pomps thy steps proclaim,
And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.
How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
Starve and defraud the people of thy reign!
Content ingloriously to pass thy days
Like one of virtue's fools that feed on praise;

Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,
Grow stale, and tarnish with our daily sight!
Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be
Or gather'd ripe, or rot upon the tree.
Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
Some lucky revolution of their fate:
Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill,
(For human good depends on human will,)
Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent,
And from the first impression takes the bent:
But, if unseiz'd, she glides away like wind,
And leaves repenting folly far behind.
Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize,
And spreads her locks before her as she flies.
Had thus old David, from whose loins you spring,
Not dar'd when fortune call'd him to be king,
At Gath an exile he might still remain,
And heaven's anointing oil had been in vain.
Let his successful youth your hopes engage;
But shun the example of declining age:
Behold him setting in his western skies,
The shadows lengthening as the vapours rise.
He is not now, as when on Jordan's sand
The joyful people throng'd to see him land,
Covering the beach, and blackening all the strand;
But, like the prince of angels, from his height
Comes tumbling downward with diminish'd light:
Betray'd by one poor plot to public scorn:
(Our only blessing since his curst return):
Those heaps of people which one sheaf did bind,

Blown off and scatter'd by a puff of wind.
What strength can he to your designs oppose,
Naked of friends and round beset with foes?
If Pharaoh's doubtful succour he should use,
A foreign aid would more incense the Jews:
Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship bring:
Foment the war, but not support the king:
Nor would the royal party e'er unite
With Pharaoh's arms to assist the Jebusite;
Or if they should, their interest soon would break,
And with such odious aid make David weak.
All sorts of men by my successful arts,
Abhorring kings, estrange their alter'd hearts
From David's rule: and 'tis their general cry,
Religion, commonwealth, and liberty.
If you, as champion of the public good,
Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,
What may not Israel hope, and what applause
Might such a general gain by such a cause?
Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower
Fair only to the sight, but solid power:
And nobler is a limited command,
Given by the love of all your native land,
Than a successive title, long and dark,
Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's ark.
What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
When flattery soothes, and when ambition blinds?
Desire of power, on earth a vicious weed,
Yet sprung from high is of celestial seed:
In God 'tis glory; and when men aspire,

'Tis but a spark too much of heavenly fire.
The ambitious youth too covetous of fame,
Too full of angel's metal in his frame,
Unwarily was led from virtue's ways, [praise.
Made drunk with honour, and debauch'd with
Half loath, and half consenting to the ill,
For royal blood within him struggled still,
He thus replied.—And what pretence have I
To take up arms for public liberty?
My father governs with unquestion'd right;
The faith's defender, and mankind's delight;
Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws;
And heaven by wonders has espous'd his cause.
Whom has he wrong'd in all his peaceful reign?
Who sues for justice to his throne in vain?
What millions has he pardon'd of his foes,
Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose!
Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good;
Inclin'd to mercy, and averse from blood,
If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,
His crime is God's beloved attribute.
What could he gain his people to betray,
Or change his right for arbitrary sway?
Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign
His fruitful Nile, and yoke a servile train.
If David's rule Jerusalem displease,
The dogstar heats their brains to this disease.
Why then should I, encouraging the bad,
Turn rebel and run popularly mad?
Were he a tyrant, who, by lawless might,

Oppress'd the Jews, and rais'd the Jebusite,
Well might I mourn: but nature's holy bands
Would curb my spirits and restrain my hands:
The people might assert their liberty;
But what was right in them were crime in me.
His favour leaves me nothing to require,
Prevents my wishes, and outruns desire;
What more can I expect while David lives?
All but his kingly diadem he gives:
And that—But there he paus'd; then sighing, said—
Is justly destin'd for a worthier head.
For when my father from his toils shall rest,
And late augment the number of the blest,
His lawful issue shall the throne ascend,
Or the collateral line, where that shall end.
His brother, though oppress'd with vulgar spite,
Yet dauntless, and secure of native right,
Of every royal virtue stands possest;
Still dear to all the bravest and the best.
His courage foes, his friends his truth proclaim;
His loyalty the king, the world his fame.
His mercy e'en the offending crowd will find;
For sure he comes of a forgiving kind.
Why should I then repine at heaven's decree,
Which gives me no pretence to royalty?
Yet oh that fate propitiously inclin'd,
Had rais'd my birth, or had debas'd my mind;
To my large soul not all her treasure lent,
And then betray'd it to a mean descent!
I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,

And David's part disdains my mother's mould.
Why am I scanted by a niggard birth?
My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth;
And, made for empire, whispers me within,
Desire of greatness is a godlike sin.

Him staggering so, when hell's dire agent found,
While fainting virtue scarce maintain'd her ground,
He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies:

The eternal God, supremely good and wise,
Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain:
What wonders are reserv'd to bless your reign,
Against your will your arguments have shown
Such virtue's only given to guide a throne.
Not that your father's mildness I contemn;
But manly force becomes the diadem.
'Tis true he grants the people all they crave;
And more perhaps, than subjects ought to have:
For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame,
And more his goodness than his wit proclaim.
But when should people strive their bonds to break,
If not when kings are negligent or weak?
Let him give on till he can give no more,
The thrifty Sanhedrim shall keep him poor;
And every shekel, which he can receive,
Shall cost a limb of his prerogative.
To ply him with new plots shall be my care;
Or plunge him deep in some expensive war;
Which when his treasure can no more supply,
He must, with the remains of kingship, buy.
His faithful friends, our jealousies and fears

Call Jebusites, and Pharaoh's pensioners;
Whom when our fury from his aid has torn,
He shall be naked left to public scorn.
The next successor, whom I fear and hate,
My arts have made obnoxious to the state;
Turn'd all his virtues to his overthrow,
And gain'd our elders to pronounce a foe.
His right, for sums of necessary gold,
Shall first be pawn'd, and afterwards be sold;
Till time shall ever-wanting David draw,
To pass your doubtful title into law:
If not, the people have a right supreme
To make their kings; for kings are made for them.
All empire is no more than power in trust,
Which, when resum'd, can be no longer just.
Succession, for the general good design'd,
In its own wrong a nation cannot bind;
If altering that the people can relieve,
Better one suffer than a nation grieve. [chose,
The Jews well know their power: ere Saul they
God was their king, and God they durst depose.
Urge now your piety, your filial name,
A father's right, and fear of future fame;
The public good, that universal call,
To which e'en heaven submitted, answers all.
Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;
'Tis nature's trick to propagate her kind.
Our fond begetters, who would never die,
Love but themselves in their posterity.
Or let his kindness by the effects be tried,

Or let him lay his vain pretence aside.
God said, he lov'd your father; could he bring
A better proof, than to anoint him king?
It surely show'd he lov'd the shepherd well,
Who gave so fair a flock as Israel.
Would David have you thought his darling son?
What means he then to alienate the crown?
The name of godly he may blush to bear:
Is't after God's own heart to cheat his heir?
He to his brother gives supreme command,
To you a legacy of barren land:
Perhaps the old harp, on which he thrums his lays,
Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your praise.
Then the next heir, a prince severe and wise,
Already looks on you with jealous eyes;
Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,
And marks your progress in the people's hearts;
Though now his mighty soul its grief contains:
He meditates revenge who least complains;
And like a lion, slumbering in the way,
Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
His fearless foes within his distance draws,
Constrains his roaring, and contracts his paws;
Till at the last his time for fury found,
He shoots with sudden vengeance from the ground;
The prostrate vulgar passes o'er and spares,
But with a lordly rage his hunters tears.
Your case no tame expedients will afford:
Resolve on death, or conquest by the sword,
Which for no less a stake than life you draw;

And self-defence is nature's eldest law.
Leave the warm people no considering time:
For then rebellion may be thought a crime.
Avail yourself of what occasion gives,
But try your title while your father lives:
And that your arms may have a fair pretence,
Proclaim you take them in the king's defence;
Whose sacred life each minute would expose
To plots, from seeming friends, and secret foes.
And who can sound the depth of David's soul?
Perhaps his fear his kindness may control.
He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
For plighted vows too late to be undone.
If so, by force he wishes to be gain'd:
Like women's lechery to seem constrain'd.
Doubt not: but, when he most affects the frown,
Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
Secure his person to secure your cause:
They who possess the prince possess the laws.
He said, and this advice above the rest,
With Absalom's mild nature suited best;
Unblam'd for life, ambition set aside,
Not stain'd with cruelty, nor puft with pride.
How happy had he been, if destiny
Had higher plac'd his birth, or not so high!
His kingly virtues might have claim'd a throne,
And blest all other countries but his own.
But charming greatness since so few refuse,
'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.
Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,

With blandishments to gain the public love:
To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
And popularly prosecute the plot.
To further this, Achitophel unites
The malcontents of all the Israelites:
Whose differing parties he could wisely join,
For several ends, to serve the same design.
The best, and of the princes some were such,
Who thought the power of monarchy too much;
Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts;
Not wicked, but seduc'd by impious arts.
By these the springs of property were bent,
And wound so high, they crack'd the government.
The next for interest sought to embroil the state,
To sell their duty at a dearer rate;
And make their Jewish markets of the throne;
Pretending public good to serve their own.
Others thought kings a useless heavy load,
Who cost too much, and did too little good.
These were for laying honest David by,
On principles of pure good husbandry.
With them join'd all the haranguers of the throng,
That thought to get preferment by the tongue.
Who follow next a double danger bring,
Not only hating David, but the king;
The Solymæan rout; well vers'd of old,
In godly faction, and in treason bold;
Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword;
But lofty to a lawful prince restor'd;
Saw with disdain an Ethnic plot begun,

And scorn'd by Jebusites to be outdone.
Hot Levites headed these; who pull'd before
From the ark, which in the Judges' days they bore,
Resum'd their cant, and with a zealous cry
Pursued their old beloved Theocracy:
Where Sanhedrim and priest enslav'd the nation,
And justified their spoils by inspiration:
For who so fit to reign as Aaron's race,
If once dominion they could found in grace!
These led the pack; though not of surest scent,
Yet deepest mouth'd against the government.
A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed,
Of the true old enthusiastic breed:
'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.
But far more numerous was the herd of such,
Who think too little, and who talk too much.
These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,
Ador'd their fathers' God and property;
And by the same blind benefit of fate
The devil and the Jebusite did hate:
Born to be sav'd, even in their own despite,
Because they could not help believing right.
Such were the tools: but a whole Hydra more
Remains of sprouting heads too long to score.
Some of their chiefs were princes of the land;
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand;
A man so various, that he seem'd to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;

Was every thing by starts, and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon:
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes;
And both, to show his judgment, in extremes:
So over violent, or over civil,
That every man with him was God or Devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art:
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggar'd by fools, whom still he found too late;
He had his jest, and they had his estate.
He laugh'd himself from court; then sought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief:
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
On Absalom and wise Achitophel:
Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left not faction, but of that was left.

Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse
Of lords, below the dignity of verse.
Wits, warriors, commonwealth's-men, were the best:
Kind husbands, and mere nobles, all the rest.
And therefore, in the name of dulness, be

550 *Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon*]
Schænobates, augur, medicus, magus, omnia novit.
J. W.

The well hung Balaam and cold Caleb free:
And canting Nadab let oblivion damn,
Who made new porridge for the paschal lamb.
Let friendship's holy band some names assure;
Some their own worth, and some let scorn secure.
Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place,
Whom kings no titles gave, and God no grace:
Not bull-fac'd Jonas, who could statutes draw

574 *cold Caleb*] Lord Grey, who was childless. MS. note by Mr. Luttrell. *M.*

575 *And canting Nadab let oblivion damn,*
Who made new porridge for the paschal lamb]

Nadab is Lord Howard of Escrick, who took the sacrament in lamb's wool. MS. note by Mr. Luttrell. *M.*

Ford, Lord Grey of Werk, was strongly attached to the Duke of Monmouth, a zealous promoter of Lord Shaftesbury's measures, and a constant opponent of the court. He was a smooth talker, possessed of a large estate, both which accomplishments gave him influence among the people. Being concerned in the Ryehouse plot, he was arrested, and examined before the privy-council, who ordered him to the Tower; but when the messenger, who had the care of him, brought him thither, the gates were shut, it being late, and they could not get in; so that they spent the whole night together, and drank pretty freely. In the morning they came to the Tower again very early, the doors not being as yet opened; and his keeper, who was very drunk, falling asleep, he turned down towards the wharf, and taking oars, got off to Holland. Here he joined his old friend Monmouth, whom he contributed to spirit up to the rebellion in the ensuing reign, that brought that unhappy nobleman to the block.

581 *Jonas, who could statutes draw*] Sir William Jones. He drew the Habeas Corpus act. MS. Luttrell. *M.*

To mean rebellion, and make treason law.
But he, though bad, is follow'd by a worse,
The wretch who heaven's anointed dar'd to curse;
Shimei, whose youth did early promise bring
Of zeal to God and hatred to his king;
Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,
And never broke the sabbath, but for gain:
Nor was he ever known an oath to vent,
Or curse, unless against the government.
Thus heaping wealth, by the most ready way
Among the Jews, which was to cheat and pray:
The city, to reward his pious hate
Against his master, chose him magistrate.
His hand a vare of justice did uphold;
His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.

585 *Shimei, whose youth did early promise bring*
Of zeal to God and hatred to his king]

Shimei, Slingsby Bethel, esq. by poll chosen one of the sheriffs for the city of London, on Midsummer-day, 1680, was a zealous fanatic, and had been formerly one of the committee of safety; however, to render himself fit for his office, he received the sacrament, and renounced the covenant, but not his factious principles. Burnet calls him a man of knowledge, and says he wrote a learned book about the interest of princes; but that his miserable way of living, and miserly disposition, was very prejudicial to his party, and rendered him disagreeable to every body.

594 *Against his master, chose him magistrate*] Sheriff. MS. Luttrell. *M.*

595 *a vare of justice*] Thus the first edition.—Derrick reads *vase*; but see Howel's Letters, p. 161. ed. 1728. 'Vara' is Spanish for a wand.

During his office treason was no crime;
The sons of Belial had a glorious time:
For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,
Yet lov'd his wicked neighbour as himself.
When two or three were gather'd to declaim
Against the monarch of Jerusalem,
Shimei was always in the midst of them:
And if they curs'd the king when he was by,
Would rather curse than break good company.
If any durst his factious friends accuse,
He pack'd a jury of dissenting Jews;
Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
Would free the suffering saint from human laws.
For laws are only made to punish those
Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.
If any leisure time he had from power,
(Because 'tis sin to misemploy an hour,)
His business was, by writing to persuade,
That kings were useless, and a clog to trade:
And, that his noble style he might refine,
No Rechabite more shunn'd the fumes of wine.
Chaste were his cellars, and his shrieval board
The grossness of a city feast abhorr'd:
His cooks with long disuse their trade forgot;

614 *His business was, by writing to persuade,* &c.] See his 'Interest of the several Protestant Powers.' MS. note by Mr. Luttrell. *M.*

618 *Chaste were his cellars, and his shrieval board,* &c.] He kept a very poor and scandalous shrievaltry. MS. note by Mr. Luttrell. *M.*

Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot.
Such frugal virtue malice may accuse;
But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews:
For towns, once burnt, such magistrates require
As dare not tempt God's providence by fire.
With spiritual food he fed his servants well,
But free from flesh that made the Jews rebel:
And Moses' laws he held in more account,
For forty days of fasting in the mount.
To speak the rest who better are forgot,
Would tire a well-breath'd witness of the plot.
Yet, Corah, thou shalt from oblivion pass;
Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
High as the serpent of thy metal made,
While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.
What, though his birth were base, yet comets rise
From earthly vapours, ere they shine in skies.
Prodigious actions may as well be done
By weaver's issue, as by prince's son.
This arch-attestor for the public good
By that one deed ennobles all his blood.
Who ever ask'd the witnesses' high race,
Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen grace?
Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,
His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen.
Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,
Sure signs he neither choleric was nor proud:

639 *By weaver's issue*, &c.] Titus Oates was the son of a weaver. MS. note by Mr. Luttrell. *M.*

His long chin prov'd his wit; his saint-like grace
A church vermilion, and a Moses' face.
His memory, miraculously great,
Could plots, exceeding man's belief, repeat;
Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,
For human wit could never such devise.
Some future truths are mingled in his book;
But where the witness fail'd, the prophet spoke:
Some things like visionary flights appear;
The spirit caught him up the Lord knows where;
And gave him his rabbinical degree,
Unknown to foreign university.
His judgment yet his memory did excel;
Which piec'd his wondrous evidence so well,
And suited to the temper of the times,
Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.
Let Israel's foes suspect his heavenly call,
And rashly judge his writ apocryphal;
Our laws for such affronts have forfeits made:
He takes his life who takes away his trade.
Were I myself in witness Corah's place,
The wretch who did me such a dire disgrace,
Should whet my memory, though once forgot,
To make him an appendix of my plot.
His zeal to heaven made him his prince despise,
And load his person with indignities.
But zeal peculiar privilege affords,

659 *Unknown to foreign university*] He pretended to have taken a degree at Salamanca. MS. note by Mr. Luttrell. *M.*

Indulging latitude to deeds and words:
And Corah might for Agag's murder call,
In terms as coarse as Samuel us'd to Saul.
What others in his evidence did join,
The best that could be had for love or coin,
In Corah's own predicament will fall:
For witness is a common name to all.
  Surrounded thus with friends of every sort,
Deluded Absalom forsakes the court:
Impatient of high hopes, urg'd with renown,
And fir'd with near possession of a crown.
The admiring crowd are dazzled with surprise,

676 *And Corah might for Agag's murder call*] Agag, 'Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, was a man of a very good character, of a reserved melancholy turn of mind, an enemy to all persecution, and rather a protector than prosecutor of Nonconformists. He had, with reluctance, received Oates's information. As to the report that prevailed of his having been murdered by the papists, because their violent enemy, it was without any manner of foundation, for he was upon good terms with the party in general. It has been affirmed, that he hanged himself in his own house, and that his two brothers, who were his next heirs, had the body conveyed abroad, and the sword run through it, that so it might be thought he was assassinated, and the crown thereby prevented from seizing on his effects.' *Burnet, Echard, Smollett.* *D.*

686 *The admiring crowd are dazzled with surprise,*
And on his goodly person feed their eyes.]

Here the poet describes the tour taken by the Duke of Monmouth after his return from Holland, without the king's leave, and with the advice of Shaftesbury, to whose councils he had fatally resigned himself. This progress, he justly observes, though couched under the notion of its being made for hunting, and the diversions of the country, was, in reality,

And on his goodly person feed their eyes.
His joy conceal'd, he sets himself to show;
On each side bowing popularly low:

to try how the people stood affected; whether the suspicions against the queen and the Duke of York were sufficiently inculcated, to give Monmouth an opportunity of mounting the throne, in case of the king's death; and his ambition he disguised under the specious pretences of his being the king's lawful son, whose right was suppressed to make way for an uncle's usurpation; of his being the avowed champion of the Protestant religion, and the only one of the royal family who had the courage openly to declare himself an enemy to popery and slavery.

With regard to the make and outward graces of Monmouth's person, (says Grammont,) nature never formed a man more complete. Every feature of his face had a peculiar delicacy, and altogether exhibited a countenance, beautiful without effeminacy, manly, yet not robust. His body was finely formed; he was extremely agile, fenced admirably, and was one of the best horsemen of his time; but he had a soul very unequal to such a tenement. He had no sentiments of his own; his voice was pleasing; his manner of expressing himself captivating; but these accomplishments were used only to deliver the thoughts and words of other people. He was rash in his undertakings; irresolute and uncertain in the execution; abject and cowering in distress; he begged his life of James II. with tears in his eyes. That monarch treated his sorrow slightly; the queen insulted it. When he found he had no hopes of life, he assumed an air of philosophic calmness, and met death with indifference. He was brave in the field, felt for the distresses of humanity, was kind to his inferiors, and naturally very generous. With these virtues he might have proved a friend to his country, and a pillar of the throne, had fortune thrown him into the hands of honest men; for his ruin was owing to his connexions, not to himself. *D*

His looks, his gestures, and his words he frames,
And with familiar ease repeats their names.
Thus form'd by nature, furnish'd out with arts,
He glides unfelt into their secret hearts.
Then, with a kind compassionating look,
And sighs, bespeaking pity ere he spoke,
Few words he said; but easy those and fit,
More slow than Hybla-drops, and far more sweet.
I mourn, my countrymen, your lost estate;
Though far unable to prevent your fate:
Behold a banish'd man for your dear cause
Expos'd a prey to arbitrary laws!
Yet oh! that I alone could be undone,
Cut off from empire, and no more a son!
Now all your liberties a spoil are made;
Egypt and Tyrus intercept your trade,
And Jebusites your sacred rites invade.
My father, whom with reverence yet I name,
Charm'd into ease, is careless of his fame;
And, brib'd with petty sums of foreign gold,
Is grown in Bathsheba's embraces old;
Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys;
And all his power against himself employs.
He gives, and let him give, my right away:
But why should he his own and yours betray?
He, only he, can make the nation bleed,
And he alone from my revenge is freed.
Take then my tears, with that he wip'd his eyes,
'Tis all the aid my present power supplies:
No court-informer can these arms accuse;

King's hands, was never delivered, and the king admitted he had never received it

see "Camden Miscellany Vol VIII (1883)
"Original Letters of the Duke of Monmouth"

These arms may sons against their fathers use:
And 'tis my wish, the next successor's reign
May make no other Israelite complain.
Youth, beauty, graceful action seldom fail;
But common interest always will prevail:
And pity never ceases to be shown
To him who makes the people's wrongs his own.
The crowd, that still believe their kings oppress,
With lifted hands their young Messiah bless:
Who now begins his progress to ordain
With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train:
From east to west his glories he displays,
And, like the sun, the promis'd land surveys.
Fame runs before him as the morning-star,
And shouts of joy salute him from afar:
Each house receives him as a guardian god,
And consecrates the place of his abode.
But hospitable treats did most commend
Wise Issachar, his wealthy western friend.
This moving court, that caught the people's eyes,
And seem'd but pomp, did other ends disguise:
Achitophel had form'd it, with intent
To sound the depths, and fathom where it went,

738 *wealthy western friend*] Issachar was Thomas Thynne, esq. ancestor of the Marquis of Bath, one of the most opulent commoners in the kingdom, and therefore usually called Tom of Ten Thousand. He had once been a favourite of the Duke of York, but he afterwards magnificently entertained the Duke of Monmouth and all his attendants, when he made a progress into the west, at his noble house at Longleat.
Dr. J. W.

The people's hearts, distinguish friends from foes;
And try their strength, before they came to blows.
Yet all was colour'd with a smooth pretence
Of specious love, and duty to their prince.
Religion, and redress of grievances,
Two names that always cheat, and always please,
Are often urg'd; and good king David's life
Endanger'd by a brother and a wife.
Thus in a pageant show a plot is made;
And peace itself is war in masquerade.
Oh foolish Israel! never warn'd by ill!
Still the same bait, and circumvented still!
Did ever men forsake their present ease,
In midst of health imagine a disease;
Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,
Make heirs for monarchs, and for God decree?
What shall we think? Can people give away,
Both for themselves and sons their native sway?
Then they are left defenceless to the sword
Of each unbounded, arbitrary lord:
And laws are vain, by which we right enjoy,
If kings unquestion'd can those laws destroy.
Yet if the crowd be judge of fit and just,
And kings are only officers in trust,
Then this resuming covenant was declar'd
When kings were made, or is for ever barr'd.
If those who gave the sceptre could not tie
By their own deed their own posterity,
How then could Adam bind his future race?
How could his forfeit on mankind take place?

Or how could heavenly justice damn us all,
Who ne'er consented to our father's fall?
Then kings are slaves to those whom they command,
And tenants to their people's pleasure stand.
Add, that the power for property allow'd
Is mischievously seated in the crowd:
For who can be secure of private right,
If sovereign sway may be dissolv'd by might?
Nor is the people's judgment always true:
The most may err as grossly as the few?
And faultless kings run down by common cry,
For vice, oppression, and for tyranny.
What standard is there in a fickle rout,
Which, flowing to the mark, runs faster out?
Nor only crowds but Sanhedrims may be
Infected with this public lunacy,
And share the madness of rebellious times,
To murder monarchs for imagin'd crimes.
If they may give and take whene'er they please,
Not kings alone, the Godhead's images,
But government itself at length must fall
To nature's state, where all have right to all.
Yet grant our lords the people kings can make,
What prudent men a settled throne would shake?
For whatsoe'er their sufferings were before,
That change they covet makes them suffer more.
All other errors but disturb a state;
But innovation is the blow of fate.
If ancient fabrics nod, and threat to fall,
To patch their flaws, and buttress up the wall,

Thus far 'tis duty: but here fix the mark:
For all beyond it is to touch the ark.
To change foundations, cast the frame anew,
Is work for rebels, who base ends pursue;
At once divine and human laws control,
And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.
The tampering world is subject to this curse,
To physic their disease into a worse.

Now what relief can righteous David bring?
How fatal 'tis to be too good a king!
Friends he has few, so high the madness grows,
Who dare be such must be the people's foes.
Yet some there were, e'en in the worst of days;
Some let me name, and naming is to praise.

In this short file Barzillai first appears;
Barzillai, crown'd with honour and with years.
Long since, the rising rebels he withstood

817 *In this short file*] For honour, integrity, consistency, greatness of mind, benevolence, and justice, the Duke of Ormond, Barzillai, seems to be the very first and most eminent character that ever adorned the English nobility. *Dr. J. W.*

819 ——— *the rising rebels he withstood*
In region's waste beyond the Jordan's flood]

The Duke of Ormond adhered zealously to the interest of his sovereign Charles I. in Ireland, where, being chief of a noble, ancient, and wealthy family, his power and influence were, as long as possible, exerted against the arms of Cromwell. But being at length obliged to yield to the necessity of the times, he quitted that kingdom, and accompanied King Charles II. in his exile. After the restoration, he was at once and the same time lord lieutenant of Ireland, steward of the household, groom of the stole, and privy-counsellor for the

In regions waste beyond the Jordan's flood:
Unfortunately brave to buoy the state;
But sinking underneath his master's fate:
In exile with his godlike prince he mourn'd;
For him he suffer'd, and with him return'd.
The court he practis'd, not the courtier's art:
Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart;
Which well the noblest objects knew to choose,
The fighting warrior, and recording muse.
His bed could once a fruitful issue boast;
Now more than half a father's name is lost.
His eldest hope, with every grace adorn'd,
By me, so heaven will have it, always mourn'd,
And always honour'd, snatch'd in manhood's prime
By unequal fates, and providence's crime;
Yet not before the goal of honour won,
All parts fulfill'd of subject and of son:

three kingdoms. Perhaps no man was ever better beloved, and no man deserved it better: he was liberal, brave, loyal, and sincere; a friend to the constitution, and a protector of the Protestants. On this account he was no favourite in the succeeding reign, and died in retirement, without post or employment, July, 1688, aged seventy-nine. *D.*

831 *His eldest hope, with every grace adorn'd*] Thomas Earl of Ossory, Baron Butler of More-Park by writ, eldest son of the aforesaid duke, and one of the most gallant noblemen of his time. He behaved with great bravery in the first Dutch war, under Sir Edward Spragg; and in the second was rear-admiral of the blue. He was a courageous warrior, a prudent counsellor, a dutiful son, a kind friend, a liberal patron, and a generous man. He died universally lamented in 1680. *D.*

Swift was the race, but short the time to run.
Oh narrow circle, but of power divine,
Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line!
By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was known,
Arms thy delight, and war was all thy own:
Thy force infus'd the fainting Tyrians propp'd:
And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stopp'd.
Oh ancient honour! Oh unconquer'd hand,
Whom foes unpunish'd never could withstand!
But Israel was unworthy of his name;
Short is the date of all immoderate fame.
It looks as heaven our ruin had design'd,
And durst not trust thy fortune and thy mind.
Now, free from earth, thy disencumber'd soul
Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds and starry pole: [bring,
From thence thy kindred legions mayst thou
To aid the guardian angel of thy king.
Here stop, my muse, here cease thy painful flight:
No pinions can pursue immortal height:
Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,

842 *Thy force infus'd the fainting Tyrians propp'd:*
And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stopp'd.]
Lord Ossory having married a Dutch lady, lived some time in Holland, and was of signal service in preventing the progress of the French arms, by his knowledge and advice. *D.*

846 *But Israel was unworthy of* his name;
Short is the date of all immoderate fame.
In the first edition we find
But Israel was unworthy of *thy birth,*
Short is the date of all immoderate *worth.* * *

And tell thy soul she should have fled before:
Or fled she with his life, and left this verse
To hang on her departed patron's hearse?
Now take thy steepy flight from heaven, and see
If thou canst find on earth another he:
Another he would be too hard to find;
See then whom thou canst see not far behind.
Zadoc the priest, whom, shunning power and place,
His lowly mind advanc'd to David's grace.
With him the Sagan of Jerusalem,

858 ——— *and left this verse*
To hang on her departed patron's hearse?]

This alludes to the custom of affixing poems to the pall or hearse. See Milton's Lat. Eleg. ii. 22. And his epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester, ver. 58, &c. *T.*

864 *the priest*] Sancroft (Zadoc) was advanced from the deanery of St. Paul's to the see of Canterbury. He had considerable learning, but was a man of solemn and sullen gravity and deportment. He seldom mixed in company, but led a strict and ascetic life. He lived unmarried, and rather encouraged celibacy in his clergy. He was so cold, reserved, and peevish, that few loved him. He died in a state of separation from the church, but had not the courage to own it. His death, says Burnet, ought to have put an end to the schism that some were endeavouring to raise, on the pretence that a parliamentary deprivation was never to be allowed, and therefore they looked on Sancroft as the archbishop still, and reckoned Tillotson a usurper.

Dr. J. W.

866 *the Sagan of Jerusalem*] This was Compton, brother to the Earl of Northampton. Having carried arms for some years, he was past thirty when he took orders. He applied himself more to his function than bishops, says Burnet, had commonly done. His preaching was without much life

Of hospitable soul, and noble stem;
Him of the western dome, whose weighty sense
Flows in fit words and heavenly eloquence.
The prophets' sons, by such example led,
To learning and to loyalty were bred:
For colleges on bounteous kings depend,
And never rebel was to arts a friend.
To these succeed the pillars of the laws;
Who best can plead, and best can judge a cause.
Next them a train of loyal peers ascend;
Sharp-judging Adriel, the muses' friend.

or learning. He was a great patron of the converts from popery, and of those protestants, whom the bad usage they were beginning to meet with in France, drove over to us. The Duke of York hated him. This was the bishop that carried the princess Anne to Nottingham, in order to join the party of the Prince of Orange. *Dr. J. W.*

868 *Him of the western*] This was Dolben, who was bishop of Rochester, and succeeded Sterne in the archbishopric of York; a man, says Burnet, of more spirit than discretion, an excellent preacher, but of a free conversation, which laid him open to much censure in a vicious court. During the rebellion he bore arms, and was made a major by Charles I. *Dr. J. W.*

877 *Sharp-judging Adriel*] Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, Adriel, was a man of a fine person, elegant manners, and insinuating address. When they were both young, he paid his address to Queen Anne, and to prevent a connexion Charles II. is said to have contrived a cruel and unjustifiable scheme of sending him to Tangiers in a ship so crazy as to have drowned him. He was always firm in his attachment to James II., for which, with great liberality, King William once commended him, and after some years took him into favour, and gave him a pension of £3000 a year. He was

Himself a muse: in Sanhedrin's debate
True to his prince, but not a slave of state:
Whom David's love with honours did adorn,
That from his disobedient son were torn.
Jotham of piercing wit, and pregnant thought:
Endued by nature, and by learning taught,
To move assemblies, who but only tried

a man of wit and parts, not a genius. His poems are feeble and flimsy, notwithstanding Dryden has so profusely praised his Essay on Poetry. But the prose is terse, perspicuous, and elegant, and his memoirs so curious, that we must regret they were left unfinished. He imitated the Cæsars of the Emperor Julian, a capital piece of satire, equal to any part of Lucian, in a piece called the Assembly of the gods, where many contemporary princes are introduced. I cannot forbear mentioning a sly sarcasm on King William, to whom Jupiter himself is said to have shown great esteem; but was suspected a little of some partiality, on account of his own proceeding with old father Saturn. *Dr. J. W.*

[882] *of piercing wit*] The Marquis of Halifax, Jotham, was, in Hume's opinion, the man who possessed the finest genius and most extensive capacity of all employed in public affairs, by Charles II. Hume is of opinion, that the many variations he was guilty of in his political conduct, for he voted first for the exclusion bill, then for limitations, then for expedients, and was then on good terms with the duke, might be the effects of his integrity, rather than of his ambition. Lord Orford, in his Noble Authors, vol. ii. p. 86, is of a very different opinion. He wrote many pamphlets on topics then agitated, now forgotten. His Advice to a Daughter is still read. Notwithstanding the great change of manners, it would be amusing to compare it with Mrs. Hannah More's Strictures. His moral, political, and miscellaneous thoughts are full of penetration and a deep knowledge of men and manners. *Dr. J. W.*

The worse awhile, then chose the better side:
Nor chose alone, but turn'd the balance too;
So much the weight of one brave man can do.
Hushai, the friend of David in distress;
In public storms, of manly steadfastness:
By foreign treaties he inform'd his youth,
And join'd experience to his native truth.
His frugal care supplied the wanting throne;
Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own:
'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow;
But hard the task to manage well the low:

888 *Hushai, the friend of David in distress*] Laurence Hyde, second son to Edward the great Earl of Clarendon, was advanced to the earldom of Rochester, and made treasurer in 1682, but removed from the treasury in 1684, to the office of president of the council, a post of more rank but less advantage, which gave the lively Marquis of Halifax occasion to say, that 'he had heard of many people being kicked down stairs, but the Earl of Rochester was the first he had ever known kicked up.' He was incorrupt, sincere, warm, and violent; writ well, but not a graceful speaker, though smooth and plausible. He defended his father in the house of commons with strength of argument, and power of elocution, that showed him master of great abilities; and yet with so much decency and discretion, as not to embroil himself with his opponents. Through the whole of King Charles's reign, he deported himself with so much real fidelity to his master, and such prudence, that he was not particularly pointed at, or ridiculed by any party. *D.*

890 *By foreign treaties he inform'd his youth*] In 1676 he went on an embassy to Poland, was one of the plenipotentiaries at the treaty of Nimeguen, and afterwards ambassador in Holland, where he acquitted himself with honour. He was strongly against the bill of exclusion. *D.*

For sovereign power is too depress'd or high,
When kings are forc'd to sell, or crowds to buy.
Indulge one labour more, my weary muse,
For Amiel: who can Amiel's praise refuse?
Of ancient race by birth, but nobler yet
In his own worth, and without title great:
The Sanhedrim long time as chief he rul'd,
Their reason guided, and their passion cool'd:
So dexterous was he in the crown's defence,
So form'd to speak a loyal nation's sense,
That, as their band was Israel's tribes in small,
So fit was he to represent them all.
Now rasher charioteers the seat ascend,
Whose loose careers his steady skill commend:
They, like the unequal ruler of the day,
Misguide the seasons, and mistake the way:
While he withdrawn at their mad labours smiles,
And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.

These were the chief, a small but faithful band
Of worthies, in the breach who dar'd to stand,

[899] *who can Amiel's praise*] Sir Edward Seymour, Amiel, was a man of high birth, being the elder branch of that family, of great boldness, vivacity of parts, and a graceful manner, though of insufferable pride. Burnet says, he was the first speaker of the house of commons that was not bred to the law. He knew the house and every man in it so well, that by looking about he could tell the fate of any question. Charles II. loved him personally, though he frequently voted against his measures. But once having voted for the court, the king said to him, 'You were not against me to-day,' He immediately answered—'No, Sir, I was against my conscience to-day.' *Dr. J. W.*

And tempt the united fury of the land,
With grief they view'd such powerful engines bent,
To batter down the lawful government.
A numerous faction, with pretended frights,
In Sanhedrims to plume the regal rights;
The true successor from the court remov'd;
The plot, by hireling witnesses, improv'd.
These ills they saw, and, as their duty bound,
They show'd the king the danger of the wound;
That no concessions from the throne would please,
But lenitives fomented the disease:
That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,
Was made the lure to draw the people down:
That false Achitophel's pernicious hate
Had turn'd the plot to ruin church and state:
The council violent, the rabble worse:
That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.
With all these loads of injuries oppress,
And long revolving in his careful breast
The event of things, at last his patience tir'd,
Thus, from his royal throne, by heaven inspir'd,
The god-like David spoke; with awful fear
His train their Maker in their master hear.
Thus long have I, by native mercy sway'd,
My wrongs dissembled, my revenge delay'd:
So willing to forgive the offending age;
So much the father did the king assuage.
But now so far my clemency they slight,
The offenders question my forgiving right:

That one was made for many, they contend;
But 'tis to rule; for that's a monarch's end.
They call my tenderness of blood my fear:
Though manly tempers can the longest bear.
Yet, since they will divert my native course,
'Tis time to show I am not good by force.
Those heap'd affronts that haughty subjects bring,
Are burdens for a camel, not a king.
Kings are the public pillars of the state,
Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight:
If my young Samson will pretend a call
To shake the column, let him share the fall:
But oh, that yet he would repent and live!
How easy 'tis for parents to forgive!
With how few tears a pardon might be won
From nature, pleading for a darling son!
Poor pitied youth, by my paternal care,
Rais'd up to all the height his frame could bear!
Had God ordain'd his fate for empire born,
He would have given his soul another turn:
Gull'd with a patriot's name, whose modern sense
Is one that would by law supplant his prince;
The people's brave, the politician's tool;
Never was patriot yet, but was a fool.
Whence comes it, that religion and the laws
Should more be Absalom's than David's cause?
His old instructor, ere he lost his place,
Was never thought indued with so much grace.
Good heavens, how faction can a patriot paint!

My rebel ever proves my people's saint.
Would they impose an heir upon the throne!
Let Sanhedrims be taught to give their own.
A king's at least a part of government;
And mine as requisite as their consent;
Without my leave a future king to choose,
Infers a right the present to depose.
True, they petition me to approve their choice:
But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.
My pious subjects for my safety pray;
Which to secure, they take my power away.
From plots and treasons heaven preserve my years
But save me most from my petitioners!
Unsatiate as the barren womb or grave;
God cannot grant so much as they can crave.
What then is left, but with a jealous eye
To guard the small remains of royalty!
The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,

991 *The law shall still direct*] We cannot read these words put into the mouth of Charles II. without a degree of just indignation, when we reflect on some striking transactions of his reign, particularly the appointment of that ministry called the Cabal.

All power in England, Scotland, and Ireland, was committed to six men. Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley Cooper, afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury, Lauderdale, and Roberts, the three last of whom had drawn their swords against the king's father. Clifford had raised himself by his great influence in the House of Commons; Ashley Cooper had still greater in the House of Lords: Arlington, notwithstanding his secret inclinations to popery, had maintained connexions with the dissenters. Buckingham, favouring all

And the same law teach rebels to obey:
Votes shall no more establish'd power control,
Such votes as make a part exceed the whole.
No groundless clamours shall my friends remove,
Nor crowds have power to punish ere they prove;
For Gods and godlike kings their care express,
Still to defend their servants in distress.
Oh, that my power to saving were confined!

sects, because he was of no religion himself, was a favourite of the dissenters; Lauderdale had great interest with the presbyterians of Scotland: and Shaftesbury and Buckingham were supported by the people, because they pretended a reverence for their rights. This ministry was the most extraordinary that ever was composed: for the king had an unconquerable distrust of Shaftesbury; though diverted with the humours of Buckingham, he was shocked with an advice which that duke had given him to procure a parliamentary divorce from the queen, and had once committed him to the Tower, for personal offences against himself. Arlington and Buckingham were mortal foes; and Buckingham, Shaftesbury, and Lauderdale, were averse from the influence of the Duke of York with his brother, because they thought it interfered with their own; or, at least, the Duke believed that they were so: but at the interview at Dover, the Duchess of Orleans reconciled Arlington and Buckingham, and the king to Buckingham, and knit the famous Cabal firmly together in the interests of the new alliance. See Echard and Dalrymple.

The melancholy fate of the Duchess of Orleans, after her return from Dover, supposed to have been by poison, ordered to be given her by her husband, who was jealous of her intimacy with her own brother, Charles II. is too well known, but we hope too atrocious to obtain credit. *Dr. J. W.*

Why am I forc'd, like heaven, against my mind,
To make examples of another kind!
Must I at length the sword of justice draw?
Oh curst effects of necessary law!
How ill my fear they by my mercy scan!
Beware the fury of a patient man.
Law they require, let law then show her face;
They could not be content to look on Grace,
Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
To tempt the terrors of her front and die.
By their own arts 'tis righteously decreed,
Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.
Against themselves their witnesses will swear,
'Till viper-like their mother plot they tear;
And suck for nutriment that bloody gore,
Which was their principle of life before.
Their Belial with their Beelzebub will fight;
Thus on my foes, my foes shall do me right.
Nor doubt the event: for factious crowds engage,
In their first onset, all their brutal rage.
Then let 'em take an unresisted course:
Retire, and traverse, and delude their force:
But, when they stand all breathless, urge the fight,
And rise upon them with redoubled might:
For lawful power is still superior found; [ground.
When long driven back at length it stands the

1012 *Against themselves their witnesses will swear*] Alluding to the inconsistencies and contradictions of Dr. Oates, Captain Bedloe, and other witnesses, made use of to support the credit of the Popish plot. *D.*

He said: The Almighty nodding gave consent;
And peals of thunder shook the firmament.
Henceforth a series of new time began,
The mighty years in long procession ran:
Once more the godlike David was restor'd,
And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

END OF VOL I.

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